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NORTHERN STUDIES

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TESSELSCHADE AT ALKMAAR.

STUDIES IN THE LITERATURE OF NORTHERN EUROPE

BY

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WITH A FRONTISPIECE DESIGNED AND ETCHED BY L. ALMA TADEMA, A.R.A.

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TO

Dr GEORG BRANDES

OF BERLIN

THE MOST DISTINGUISHED OF SCANDINAVIAN CRITICS

I INSCRIBE THIS BOOK

WITH ADMIRATION AND AFFECTION

PREFACE.

In selecting subjects for this book, I have been led by two considerations, choosing first what has charmed myself, and next what seems likely to amuse the reader. For in wandering unaccompanied through a new literature, the student is drawn by instinct to those epochs and those figures which are personally most attractive to him. He cannot assert that they have more general importance than others, but at least they have more individual importance to himself: he likes them better, they stimulate his imagination more than their compeers; and what has pleased him he is apt to conceive will please his friends. This is my excuse for the inequalities of my method, for the accidental character of the selection.

A few studies of salient points, prominent peaks and chains upon the map of literature, are more likely to arrest attention than a general survey of the whole, which might be tedious. But if I am happy enough to have a reader who cares to follow the connecting links and to glance over the historical plan, I may be allowed to refer him to my sketch of the literature of Denmark in

the new edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and to forthcoming articles in the same work on the literatures of Norway and of Sweden.

There would be little instruction to be found in the study of foreign poetry, if it did not throw side-lights upon our own poetic history. It is singular that this aspect has been very generally disregarded by literary historians, and that in treating the nations of the North of Europe, it has been entirely disregarded. I have striven always to remember this, and to view these foreign poets by a European and not a local light. We see Arrebo imitating Du Bartas and Rosenhane paraphrasing Ronsard like veritable Elizabethans. We see Huyghens frankly borrowing from John Donne, and Milton, in return, deigning to become indebted to Vondel. We see Oehlenschläger and Steffens, in 1800, taking long walks, with Schelling in their pockets and the revival of Danish poetry in their minds, precisely as Coleridge and Wordsworth were doing at the very same time at Grasmere. We gain by learning that the dew is not on the fleece for us alone, but that we form a part of a wide field of European culture over the whole expanse of which the rains descend in their season.

On the question of the formation of the mind by classic study I strongly hold the faith of our fathers. There is no road, I am sure, to poetic excellence in taste except through Greek, and what nature does not give us it is vain to seek elsewhere than in antiquity. I am inclined, indeed, to claim for the authors of the ancient sagas something of the intensity

and catholicity of the best Greek and Roman writers, and something, too, of their bracing effect upon the mind. But in all the modern literatures with which I deal, no one can be more conscious than I am how rarely perfection is approached, how cloudy and flickering is the light of imagination, and how great a part affectation and barbarism take even in the brightest periods of national vitality. In the sagas, however, there is none of this oscillation between excellence and bathos. If I should retain both health and leisure, it is my hope to follow Sir George Dasent and the translators of the *Grettissaga* in their admirable labours. To write a history of Icelandic literature is a thing unattempted yet in any tongue. I do not know that I have the audacity to essay such a work, but I have the greatest inclination to do so.

For the sake of those who may care to compare my versions with the originals, I have printed in an appendix the text of all the poems and portions of poems translated in the body of the book.

My very cordial thanks are due to all the friends in various countries who have so kindly volunteered to make these studies as free from errors of detail as possible. I cannot mention the names of all to whom I am indebted, but I must not fail to express special recognition of the kindness of the distinguished writer to whom this volume is inscribed, who has read through the proofs for me, and to thank Overlærer Lökke in Christiania, Professor C. R. Nyblom at Upsala, and Professor J. A. Alberdingk Thijm in Amsterdam for their very kind help.

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NORWEGIAN POETRY SINCE 1814.

It seems a pity that our knowledge of neighbouring countries should be limited so much to their merely topographical features. We travel through them by rail or steamer, we talk a little broken English with postboys and boatmen, and we presume that we know something of the nations. But in truth it is but the outermost shell that we can see; of the thought and passion of the people—of their pursuits, and ambitions, and desires—we know no more than the birds do when they fly over their land and rest on their migratory journeys. When a language is limited to a race inconsiderable in numbers, the isolation of its thought from foreigners is, of course, vastly increased. Here in England it is not worth while that many of us should learn such a language as the Dano-Norwegian, spoken by a population less than that of London. Life is too short for many such toilsome lessons, and hence we remain greatly in ignorance of what is being wrought in art and literature among such near neighbours as the Norsemen. Still, I say again, it is a pity, since doubtless in many comparatively small communities there is an intellectual activity, and a positive success in execution, which it would interest us to become acquainted with. I

shall endeavour to show that such is the case among the Norwegians.

It would be hard to point out any country in Europe whose condition at the present moment presents a more satisfactory aspect than Norway. It is not perhaps universally known that its constitution is the only one that survives out of all those created or adapted to suit the theories of democracy that prevailed in the beginning of the century. Though accepting the King of Sweden as titular monarch, Norway really rules itself, sends to Christiania a parliament (the Storthing), elected from all classes of society, and has not scrupled, on occasion, to overrule the King's especial commands, even at the risk of civil war. There is no hereditary nobility in Norway; no political restriction on the press; hardly any class distinction; and yet, so conservative, so dignified, is the nation, that freedom hardly ever lapses into licence, and the excesses which larger republics permit themselves would be impossible here. It is necessary to preface my remarks on the poetry of Norway with this statement, because the poets there, where they have been poets worth considering, have been also politicians; and I shall be obliged, on this account, to refer now and again to political developments, though I shall hope to make these references as short as possible. The political life of Norway would be in itself a fertile subject to dwell upon.

It is no more than an arbitrary dictum that fixes the rise of Norwegian literature at the date of the Declaration of Independence of 1814. For two centuries past the country had been producing eminent writers, who had attained distinction both as poets and as men of science.

The great naturalists of Norway require, and deserve, an abler pen than mine; it is with the poets that I propose to deal. A few of these, such as Peder Dass and Dorthe Engelbrechtsdatter, had preserved in the old days their national character, and sung to the Northmen only; but for the most part the writers of Norway looked to Denmark for their audience, and are to this day enrolled among the Danish poets. Holberg, Wessel, Tullin, Frimann, and a score of others, were as truly Norwegians as Welhaven and Ibsen are, but Copenhagen was the scene of their labours, and Danes were their admirers and patrons, and it is in Danish, not Norwegian, literature that they find their place. Hence it has been the habit of the Scandinavian critics to commence their histories of Norwegian bibliography with the demonstration at Eidsvold, when Norway asserted her independence, and finally separated from Denmark.

The Norske Selskab ('Norwegian Society'), that evil genius and yet, in a measure, protector of the literature it presumed to govern, had now for more than forty years scattered thunderbolts from its rooms at Copenhagen, and ruled the world of letters with a rod of iron. But this singular association, that had nourished Wessel, snubbed Edvard Storm, and hunted Ewald to the death, no longer possessed its ancient force. The glory was departing, and when the rupture with Denmark came about, the Norske Selskab began to feel that Copenhagen was no longer a fit field of action, and, gathering its robes about it, it fled across the sea to Christiania, where it dwindled to a mere club, and may, for aught I know, still so exist, a shadow of its former self. But though the Selskab, once dreaded

as the French Academy was, no longer had fangs to poison its opponents, its traditions of taste still ruled the public. Accordingly the aspect of affairs in the literary world of Christiania in the proud year of 1814 is at this distance of time neither inspiriting nor inviting. Newspapers hurriedly started and ignorantly edited, a theatre where people went to see dull tragedies of Nordal Brun's, or, worse still, translations of tawdry dramas of the Voltaire school, a chaos of foolish political pamphlets: these meet us on every hand, and every sort of writing seems to abound, save that which is the result of fine criticism and good taste. The Selskab admitted but two kinds of poetry—the humorous and the elegiac. Everyone knows what elegies used to be, what a plague they had become, and how persistently 'elegant' and 'ingenious' writers poured them forth. And, indeed, according to the journals of that time in Christiania, every verse-writer was ingenious and every tale-writer elegant. There was a total want of discrimination; every man wrote what was pleasing in his own eyes, and had it printed too; for the newspapers were open to all comers, and no poems were too stupid to be admitted. The whole country went wild with the new-found liberty; like an overdose of exhilarating tonic, freedom threw Norway into a sort of delirium, and all was joyous, confused, and irrational. Out of all this arose a new class of poetry that ran side by side with the elegiac, and after a while overwhelmed it. This has been called 'Syttendemai-Poesi,' or poesy of the 17th of May—the day on which Christian was proclaimed King of Norway, and the Storthing was finally instituted. This poesy, of course, was intensely patriotic, taking the form of odes to Eids-

vold, hymns to Old Norway, and defiance to the world at large. It is tedious, and sometimes laughable if read now; but then it had its significance, and was the inarticulate cry of a young, unsatisfied nation.

Out of the froth and whirl of the 'Syttendemai-Poesi' the works of three poets rise and take a definite shape. These claim particular notice, mainly because of their real worth, but they gained it at the time, perhaps, more by the extraordinary zeal with which they stood by and puffed one another. They have been called, the Trefoil, so impossible is it to consider them separately; and in this triplicity of theirs they formed a considerable figure in their day. I speak of Schwach, Bjerregaard, and M. C. Hansen. The first-mentioned was the most admired then, and is the least regarded now. C. A. Schwach was born in a village by the shores of Lake Miösen in 1793, and, after holding a high official position at Trondhjem for a great many years, died at Skien in 1860. His poems, originally printed in stray newspapers, were collected in three great volumes. They are very dull, being for the most part occasional verses called forth by events which are now entirely forgotten. Schwach, once the idol of the clubs and the popular poet of the day, is now seldom read and never reprinted; he exists mainly as the author of one or two popular songs that have not yet lost their charm. Bjerregaard was a man of far higher talent than Schwach; there was more melody in his heart than on his tongue; his lyrics have still some music about them, and some dewiness and sparkle. His countrymen usually class him as a poet below Hansen, and if we include, as they do, novels and all sorts of æsthetic writing as part of a poet's

vocation, they are doubtless right, for Hansen won great fame as a writer of romances; but in poetry proper I must, for my own part, set Bjerregaard far higher than his friends as a master of the art. He had greater reticence than they, and a brighter touch; he even had some desire for novelty in the matter of versification, and wrote in *terza rima* and other new metres. He produced a tragedy, too, 'Magnus Barfods Sönner' ('Magnus Barefoot's Sons'), which, I am bound to say, I have found wonderfully dreary. He was happiest in lyrical writing; I may point in passing to his pretty verses 'Vinterscener' ('Winter Scenes'), in the small collected edition of his works. He was born in the same village as Schwach was, but a year earlier, and died in 1842. M. C. Hansen, a prolific writer of novels, published exceedingly little verse, of an artificial and affected kind. Glancing down his pages, we notice such titles as 'The Pearl,' 'The Rainbow,' 'Nature in Ceylon,' and we easily gather the unreal and forced nature of the sentiment he deals in. His romances are said to be of a far better character, and he led the van of those happy innovators who turned to the real life of their humbler countrymen for a subject for their art. For this discovery, the beauty that lies hidden in a peasant's life, we must thank Hansen, and forgive his poetical sins. He died a few days before his friend Bjerregaard, and Schwach collected his works in eight huge volumes.

If there were nothing better in Norwegian poetry than the writings of these three friends, it would not be worth while to catalogue their tedious productions, and the reader might wisely turn away to more inspiriting themes. But it is not so; this early period of Syttendemâi-Poesi is

but the ridge of light-blown sand over which the traveller has to toil from his boat till he reaches the meadows and the heathery moorlands beyond. We come now to a poet whose genius, slowly developing out of the chaotic elements around it, took form, and colour, and majesty, till it lifted its possessor to a level with the noblest spirits of his time.

Henrik Arnold Thaulov Wergeland was born at Christianssand in 1808, and was the son of a political pamphleteer who attained some prominence in the ranks of the popular party. The father was one of the original members of the Storthing, and consequently the earliest years of the poet were spent at Eidsvold, in the very centre of all the turmoil of inexperienced statesmanship. Eidsvold was the vortex into which the bombast and false sentiment of the nation naturally descended, and it is impossible to doubt that the scenes of his boyhood distinctly infused into Wergeland's nature that strong political bias that he never afterwards threw off. By-and-by the lad went up to the University of Christiania, and entered heart and soul into the caprices of student life; his excesses, however, seem to have been those of eccentricity and mischievousness, for neither at this time nor ever after through his chequered life did he lose that blameless character, the sweetness of which won praise even from his enemies. It was about this time that he fell in love with a young lady, whom he had seen once only, and that in the street. He named her Stella, and, being unable to find her address, wrote daily a letter to her, tore it up and threw it out of window. His landlady remarked that the apple-blossom was falling early that

year. This ideal love for 'Stella' woke the seeds of poetry in him; he began to versify, and soon, forgetting Stella, worshipped a still less tangible but more important mistress, the Muse Thalia herself.

The first work published by the afterwards eminent poet was 'Ah!' a farce. It is usual with his admirers to pass over this and his other boyish productions in silence, but it is undoubtedly a fact that after the appearance of 'Ah!' in 1827, he wrote a great number of farces in quick succession. These farces were successful, too, and the boy dramatist began to be talked of and admired; there were not wanting those even who called him 'The Holberg of Norway,' forgetting, it would seem, that Holberg himself, the inimitable, was a Norwegian. That Wergeland himself did not prize these trifles very highly would seem from his publishing them under an Arabic pseudonym—'Siful Sifadda.' Those who have read them speak of them as not altogether devoid of fun, but founded principally on passing events, that have lost all interest now. But in 1828 he wrote a tragedy—'Sinclairs Död' ('Sinclair's Death')—and in 1829 issued some lyrical poems that showed he had distinct and worthy aims in art. These poems had an immense success; they were brimful of tasteless affectations and outrages of rhythm as well as reason, but they were full, too, of Syttendemai enthusiasm, and they spread through the country like wild-fire. Wergeland became the poet of the people; his songs were set to music and sung in the theatres; they were reprinted in all the newspapers, and sold in halfpenny leaflets in the streets. Every 17th of May the people gathered to the poet's house, and shouted, 'Hurrah for

Wergeland and Liberty!' His mild face, beaming behind great spectacles, his loose green hunting coat and shuffling gait, were hailed everywhere with applause. There are real and great merits about these early poems; they show some true knowledge of nature, some lyrical loveliness; but it was not for these, it was rather for the defiance of all laws of authorship, that the people of Christiania adored him. In 1830 he published 'Skabelsen, Mennesket og Mesias' ('The Creation, Man and the Messiah'), a drama of elephantine proportions. This portentous poem caused great diversion among the poet's enemies, and was the actual cause of an attack upon him, which ultimately divided the nation into two camps, and revolutionised the literature of Norway.

In 1831 there appeared in one of the papers a short anonymous poem, 'To H. Wergeland,' which was chiefly remarkable for the sharpness of its satire and the extreme polish of its style. It was not in the least degree bombastic or affected, and consequently was a novelty to Norwegian readers. It lashed the author of 'Skabelsen' with a pitiless calmness and seeming candour that were almost insufferable.

For years past a section of society had been developing itself in Christiania whose interests and aims lay in a very different channel from those of the great bulk of the populace. These persons, of conservative nature, saw with regret the folly of much of the noisy mock-patriotism current; they sighed for the old existence, when the cliques of Copenhagen quietly settled all questions of taste, and if there was little fervour there was at least no bathos. The leading spirit of this movement, which may

be called the Critical, was J. S. Welhaven, a young man who, born at Bergen in 1807, but early a student at the capital, had watched the career of Wergeland and had conceived an intense disdain for his poetry and his friends. It was he who, at last, had let fly this lyric arrow in the dark, and who had raised such consternation among the outraged patriots. Wergeland replied by another poem, and a controversy insensibly sprang up. In 1832 Welhaven published a thin book—'H. Wergeland's Poetry'—which at once raised a howl from all the popular journalists, and marks an era in literature. It consists of a calm and exasperating anatomy of the poet's then published writings, as withering and quite as amusing as Lord Macaulay's Essay on Robert Montgomery. It is even more bitter than this, and far more unjust, since the subject of it was a real poet and not a mere charlatan in verse. Still, with all his absurdities extracted and put side by side, Wergeland does cut a pitiable figure indeed, and one is tempted to forgive the critic when, throwing all mercy to the winds, he pours forth a torrent of eloquent invective, beginning with the words, 'Stained with all the deadly sins of poesy,' and ending with a consignment of the author to the 'mad-house of Parnassus.' Among the numerous replies called forth by this attack, the most notable was one by the poet's father, N. Wergeland, but his pamphlet, though doubtless able in its way, has nothing of the brilliant wit of Welhaven's little *brochure*. Meanwhile the outraged poet himself, who throughout the controversy seems to have behaved with great discretion, continued to attend to his own affairs. In 1831 he published 'Opium,' a drama, and in 1833 'Spaniolen, a

charming little poem, which shows a great improvement in style, and proves the beneficial effect of the criticism brought to bear on him. Still the mild-eyed man sauntered dreamily about in his loose green coat, but now he was less often seen in the streets, for, having bought a small estate just out of Christiania, he gave himself up to a passion for flowers, and to a grotto of great size and ingenuity. Poetry was the business of his life, and his spare hours were given to his grotto and his flowers. The great controversy began to take a national character, and when, in 1834, Welhaven published his polemical poem of 'Norges Dæmring' ('Norway's Twilight') there was no longer any personal character in his attacks. In that exquisite cycle of sonnets he laid bare all the roots of evil and folly that were deadening the heart of the nation, and with a pitiless censure struck at the darling institutions of the national party. He called for a wider patriotism and a healthier enthusiasm than the frothy zeal of the Syttendemai demonstrations could show, and in verse that was as sublime as it was in the truest sense patriotic, he prophesied a glorious future for the nation, when it should be led by calmer statesmen, and no longer beaten about like an unsteady ship by every wind of faction. Then Norwegians would estimate their own dignity justly; then poetry and painting, journalism and statesmanship, all the arts and sciences, would join to form one harmonious whole, and the young nation grow up into a perfect man. Then, winding up his argument, he cries—

> Thy dwelling, peasant, is on holy ground;
> What Norway was, that she again may be,
> By land, by sea, and in the world of men!

The publication of 'Norges Dæmring' naturally enough called forth a still louder protestation from the popular leaders, and the battle raged more fiercely than ever. No longer was it the principal champions who led the fight; these retired for a while, and their friends took up the cause. Sylvester Sivertson, a poor imitator of Wergeland, frantically attacked 'Norges Dæmring,' and Hermann Foss, a new convert to the critical party, as stoutly defended it; and so matters went on till about 1838.

From this time misfortunes fell upon Wergeland in ever increasing severity. One by one the lights all faded out of his life, and left it wan and bare. First of all he lost an official position which brought him in a considerable income. The King, the unpopular John, in a moment of whim, deprived him of this office. Still the profits of his poems and the sums brought in by his theatrical writings were enough to keep him in comfort. The loose green coat was seen wandering about his garden more than ever; but in an unlucky moment King John repented of his haste, and ordered the poet a certain pension from the State. Wergeland consented to take the money only on the express condition that he was to be allowed to spend it all in the formation of a library for the poor; but, alas! only half of this transaction was known to the public, and in the newspapers of the next week Wergeland found himself stigmatised by his own friends as 'the betrayer of the Fatherland.' So intensely unpopular was King John, that to receive money from him, was to receive money, it was considered, from an enemy of the nation, and by a sharp revolution of Fortune's wheel

the popular poet became the object of general distrust and disgrace. It is vain to argue against a sudden fancy of this kind; the remonstrances of Wergeland were drowned in journalistic invective; and the grief and humiliation acted so injuriously on the poet's irritable nerves, that he fell into confirmed ill-health, and from this time rapidly sank towards death. Other sorrows followed that made these inner troubles still less bearable. The poet became involved in a tedious law-suit, which drained his finances so completely that the pretty country house, the grotto, and the beloved flower-beds had to be relinquished, and lodgings in town received the already invalided Wergeland. Shattered in body and estate, forsaken and misjudged by his countrymen, it might have been expected that the mind of the man would have been depressed and weakened, but it was not so. In a poem of this very time, he says:—

My house and ground,
My horse and hound,
Have passed away and are not found!
But something yet within me lies
That law and lawyer's touch defies.

And it was just at this very time, when he was bowed down with adversity, that the singing faculty in him burst forth with unprecedented vigour, and found a purer and juster expression than ever before. The last five years of his life saw his genius scatter all the clouds and vapours that enwrapped it.

The first of these swan-songs was 'Jan van Huysums Blomsterstykke' ('J. van Huysum's Flower-piece'), a series of lyrics with prose interjaculations. This is by far

the most beautiful of his political poems—for such it must be called, being thoroughly interpenetrated by his fiery republicanism. No poet save Shelley has decked the bare shell of politics with brighter wreaths than Wergeland; and it must be remembered that while in the mouth of an English poet these principles are dreamy and Utopian, to a Norwegian of that time they were matter of practical hope; and though Wergeland did not live to see it, there soon came a time when, King John having passed away, the high-minded Oscar permitted those very alterations in the Constitution which the popular party were sighing for. In 'Jan van Huysums Blomsterstykke' the poet takes a flower-piece of that painter's cunning workmanship, and gazes at it till it seems to start into life, and the whole mass—flowers, insects, and the porcelain jar itself—becomes a symbol of passionate humanity to him. The blossoms are souls longing for a happier world; here the poppies cry for vengeance like bubbles of blood from the torn throat of some martyr for liberty; here the tulips flame out of their pale-green sheaths like men who burst their bonds and would be free; roses, columbines, narcissi, each suggest some brilliant human parallel to the poet, and all is moulded into verse that is melody itself. We rise from reading the poem as from studying some exquisite piece of majolica, or a page of elaborate arabesques; we feel it never can be as true to our own faith as it was to the writer's, but we regard it as a lovely piece of art, shapely and well-proportioned. It was presented as a bouquet to Fredrika Bremer.

The next year saw the publication of 'Svalen' ('The Swallow'), a poem suggested by the bereavement of the

poet's excellent sister Augusta.' It was 'a midsummer morning story for mothers who have lost their children,' and was sent to cheer the downcast heart of his sister. It is one of the most ethereal poems ever written; a lyrical rhapsody of faith in God and triumph over death. A short extract will indicate the profuse and ebullient manner of its composition:—

Then I lifted
Up my soul, and saw the swallow
Sinking, floating, softly fly
Through the milk-white clouds on high,
And my heart rejoiced anew;
How she drifted!
Through the blue I scarce could follow
Her sun-gilded body, though
Sol lay in a dark cloud-hollow:
How she sprang; and turned, in flashing,
As if weaving in mid-air
With her wing-points through and through
Some strange web of gold and blue.
With my thoughts I followed, dashing
Through the light with little care,
While the balsam-drops afar
On her beak
Glittered like a double star.[1]

By this time the author was himself upon his death-bed, but he lingered a few years yet, long enough to see his popularity slowly return, and to hear again the *vivats* of the people on the 17th of May. It was not his own troubles, but the grievances of a down-trodden people, that filled his last thoughts. By the laws of Norway no Jews whatever, under heavy penalties, might settle in the realm, and the hearts of high-minded men were exercised to put

[1] Appendix A.

an end to this injustice.[1] In 1842 Wergeland published 'Jöden' ('The Jew'), an idyllic poem 'in nine sprays of blossoming thorn,' or cantos, in which the cause of the Hebrew outcasts was eloquently pleaded. The work created a great deal of excitement, and, to clinch the nail he had struck in, the poet produced in 1844 'Jödinden ('The Jewess'), in 'eleven sprays of blossoming thorn. These powerful poems, accompanied by prose writings of a similar tendency, produced the desired effect, and the restriction was, in the course of a few years, removed.

But it was not for Wergeland to watch this consummation. Already the darkness of death was gathering round his bed, though the strong brain lost none of its power and the swift hand increased in cunning. A few months before the end his last and greatest poem appeared —'Den engelske Lods' ('The English Pilot')—in which all his early life of travel and excitement seems to have passed before his eyes and to have been photographed in verse. There is no trace of depression or weakness; it is not the sort of book a man writes upon his death-bed; it is lively and full of incident, humorous and yet pathetic. The groundwork of the piece is a reminiscence of the poet's own visit to England many years before. Kent, Brighton, the Isle of Wight, and the 'Hampshire Fjord' are drawn in rose-colour by an only too enthusiastic pen, and the idyllic story that gives title to the whole—namely, the loves of Johnny Johnson and Mary Ann—is interwoven skilfully enough. The final episode, the return to the Norwegian province of Hardanger, is particularly vivid, and the descriptions of landscape singularly true and

charming. Here is a fragment from the close of the poem, describing the native scenes :—

Where in pale blue ranks arise
  Alps that rim the mountain valley;
Where above the crystal spring
  Blooms the snow-white apple-tree,
  And in tracks of snow you see
Wild white roses blossoming;
Where a stream begins its song
  Like a wind-harp low and muffled,
Murmuring though the moss and stones;
Then among the alders moans,
  Rushes out, involved and muffled,
By a youthful impulse driven,
  Foaming, till it reach the vale,
And, like David with his harp,
  From a shepherd made a king[1]
  By the songs that it can sing,
Triumphs through the listening dale.

The only mistake is that the poet, whose English was defective, must needs preserve the local colouring by hauling bits of our language, or what he supposed it to be, bodily into his verse. Such a passage as this, coming in the middle of an excited address to Liberty in England, breaks down one's gravity altogether:

Ho! Johnny, ho! how do you do?
  Sing, Sailor, oh!
Well! toddy is the sorrows' foe!
  Sing, Sailor, oh!

It should be a solemn warning to those who travel and then write a book, not to quote in the language of the country.

He sank slowly but steadily. His death was in some

[1] Appendix B.

respects very singular. All through life he had enjoyed the presence and touch of flowers in a more intimate way than even most lovers of such sweet things can understand; and as he became unconscious of the attentions of his friends, and inattentive even to his wife's voice, it was observed that he watched a wall-flower, blossoming in the window, with extraordinary intensity. The last verses which he composed, or at least dictated, were addressed to this plant, and form as remarkable a parting word of genius as any that has been recorded. These beautiful stanzas I have attempted to render as follows :—

O Wall-flower, or ever thy bright leaves fade,
My limbs will be that of which all are made;
Before ever thou losest thy crown of gold
My flesh will be mould,

And yet open the casement; till I am dead,
Let my last look rest on thy golden head!
My soul would kiss thee before it flies
To the open skies.

Twice I am kissing thy fragrant mouth,
And the first kiss wholly is thine, in truth;
But the second remember, dear love, to close
On my fair white rose.

I shall not be living its spring to see,
But bring it my greeting when that shall be,
And say that I wished that upon my grave
It should bloom and wave.

Yes, say that I wished that against my breast
The rose should lie that thy lips caressed,
And, Wall-flower, do thou into Death's dark porch
Be its bridal torch.[1]

At last, on July 12, 1845, as his wife stood watching

[1] Appendix C.

him, his eyes opened, and he said to her, 'I was dreaming so sweetly; I dreamed I was lying in my mother's arms;' and so he sighed away his breath. His funeral was like that of a prince or a great general; all shops were shut the streets were draped with black flags, and a great multitude followed the bier to the grave. When the coffin was lowered a shower of laurel crowns was thrown in from all sides. So passed away the most popular of northern poets in the thirty-eighth year of his life.

Welhaven's poetical activity reached its climax during the ten years that followed the death of Wergeland. His poems were exclusively lyrical pieces of no great length; 'Norges Dæmring' being the only long poem he attempted. He is singular, too, among Norwegian writers for having never at any part of his life written for the stage. His prose is as carefully elaborated as his verse, and is probably the most brilliant and finished in the language, or at least in Norwegian literature. His great mission seems to have been, like that of Lessing in Germany and Heiberg in Denmark, to revolutionise the world of taste, and to institute a great new school of letters, less by the production of fine works of art from himself than by the introduction of sound canons of criticism for the use of others. In 1840 Welhaven became professor of philosophy at the University, and between 1839 and 1859 published a series of volumes of poetry, chiefly romances and those small versified stories that are called 'epical' poems in Scandinavia. These verses are very polished and correct in form, and they move with dignity and a certain virile power characteristic of their author, but they are lacking in the highest forms of imaginative originality. His prose

writings were of a more positive excellence; they have not been approached by any of his countrymen, and one of them, a study of the Dano-Norwegian poetry of the last century, ranks high in the critical literature of all Scandinavia.

Welhaven had the personal attractiveness that marks most great movers of men; his grave and handsome figure, not unallied with a certain arrogance, usually retained a dignified reserve which melted into a geniality all the more charming by contrast, when he found himself in the circle of his intimate friends. He died October 21, 1873, after a long period of shattered health. In him the critical spirit comes to perfection, as in Wergeland the spontaneous; the latter had much of the flabby mental texture of Coleridge—a soft woollen fabric shot through with gold threads—the former is all cloth of silver. Of the voluminous writings of Wergeland, only his death-bed poems (forming the latter half of the third volume of his collected works) may be read in future times; the sparse words of Welhaven will all be prized and enjoyed. The former will inspire the greatest enthusiasm and the latter the deepest admiration.

An individual who deserves a few moments' attention before we pass on is M. B. Landstad, who was born as long ago as 1802, in a remote cluster of houses just under the North Cape. We regard the little town of Hammerfest as the most hyperborean place in the world, but to young Landstad in his arctic home Hammerfest must have seemed a centre of southern luxury. One needs to have glided all day, as I have done, among the barren creeks and desolate fjords of Finmark, to appreciate the vast ex-

panse of loneliness—a very Deadman's Land—that lay between the lad and civilisation. I wish his poems were better, for the sake of the romance; but in fact he is a rather tame religious poet, and would in himself claim no notice at all, were it not that he has undertaken two great labours which have had a bearing on the poetical life of the country. From 1834 to 1848 Landstad was pastor of a parish in the heart of Thelemarken, the wildest of all the provinces of Norway, and he occupied his spare time in collecting as many as he could of the national songs (*Folkeviser*) which still float in the memories of the peasantry. He published a very large collection, in rather a tasteless form, in 1853; but though the work is too clumsy for common use, it has proved of the greatest service as a storehouse for more critical students of the old Norse language. Too much praise, however, must not be accorded to him even on this score, for Asbjörnsen and Moe were in the field ten years earlier, as we shall see farther on in our history. Another great labour of Landstad's was the compilation of a psalm-book for general use in churches, to supersede the various old collections. Our arctic poet, whose fault ever is to be too diffuse, produced his psalm-book, at Government expense, on a scale so huge as to be quite unfit for the use for which it was intended. Still, like the *Folkeviser*, it forms a useful storehouse for others to collect what is valuable from, and still continues to be the standard edition of religious poetry.

In Cowley's comedy of 'The Guardian' a poet is introduced, who is so miserable that everything he sees reminds him of Niobe in tears. 'That Niobe, Doggrell, you have used worse than Phœbus did. Not a dog looks melancholy

but he's compared to Niobe.' So it is with the person that meets us next upon our pilgrimage. Nothing ever cheers or enlivens him; at the slightest excitement he falls into floods of genteel grief, and when other people are laughing he is thinking of Niobe. Andreas Munch, a son of the poet-bishop of Christianssand, was born in 1811, and through a long life has been the author of a great many lyrical and dramatic volumes. After the turmoil of Sytten-demai-Poesi and the rage of the great critical controversy, it was rather refreshing to meet with a poet who was never startling or exciting, whose song-life was pitched in a minor key, and whose personality seemed moist with dramatic tears. If he had no great depth of thought, he had at least considerable beauty of metrical form, and was always 'in good taste.' Andreas Munch basked for a while in universal popularity. He was called 'Norway's first skald,' but whether first in time or first in merit would seem to be doubtful. It was not till 1846 that he published any work of real importance, and in that year appeared 'Den Eensomme ('The Solitary'), a romance founded on the morbid but fascinating idea of a soul that, folding inward upon itself, ever increasingly shuns the fellowship of mankind, while the agonies of isolation rack it more and more. The scene of the story is laid in modern times, and an additional horror is by that means given to an idea which, though it would hardly have presented itself to any but a sickly mind, is carried out with skill and effect. Shortly upon this followed another prose work of considerable merit—'Billeder fra Nord og Syd ('Pictures from North and South')—which had a great success. In 1850 he printed 'Nye Digte' ('New Poems'), which are the

prettiest he has produced, and mark the climax of his literary life. The melancholy tone of these poems does not reach the maudlin, and goes no farther than the shadowy pensiveness of which Ingemann had set the example. All through life Munch has been strongly influenced by the works of Ingemann, whose most consistent scholar he is. Even here, however, we feel that there is want of power and importance; these are only verses of occasion. 'Miscellany Poems,' as our great-grandfathers called them, the world has seen enough of; it is a grave error for an eminent writer to add to their number.

With the year 1852 begins Munch's period of greatest volubility. It would be a weariness to enumerate his works, but there are two that we must linger over, because of their extreme popularity, and because they are the very first works a novice in Norwegian is likely to meet with; I mean the dramas 'Solomon de Caus' and 'Lord William Russell.' The first of these was published in 1855, and caused a sensation not only in Scandinavia, but as far as Germany and Holland. De Caus was the man who discovered the power of steam, and who was shut up in a mad-house as a reward for his discovery. There is decidedly a good tragical idea involved in this story, and Munch deserves praise for noticing it. But his treatment of the plot leaves much to be desired, and a religious element is dragged in, which is incongruous and confusing. The poem is fairly good; but when so much has been written about it, praising it to the skies, one is surprised, on a closer inspection, to find it so tame and unreal. Of a better order of writing is 'Lord William Russell,' 1857—on the whole, perhaps, the best work of Andreas Munch's—well-considered, carefully

written, and graceful. But there is, even here, little penetration of character, and the worst fault is that the noble figure of Rachel Russell is drawn so timidly and faintly, that the true tragical heart of the story is hardly brought before us at all. Lady Russell, it is true, constantly walks the stage, but she weeps and sentimentalises, describes the landscape, and cries, 'Fie, bad man!'—does everything, in fact, but show the noble heroism of Russell's wonderful wife. The dialogue is without vigour, but it is purely and gracefully written; and, to give the author his due, the play is a really creditable production, as modern tragedies go. But no one that could read Ibsen would linger over Munch; we are about to introduce a dramatist indeed.

We have still a little way to go before we reach the real founder of the Norwegian drama. We must follow Niobe a little farther. Andreas Munch has continued to the present date to issue small volumes of lyrics in smart succession. Gradually he has lost even the charm of form and expression, and his best admirers are getting weary of him. In truth, he belongs to the class of graceful sentimentalists, that Hammond and L. E. L. successively represented with us, and but few of his writings can hope to retain the popular ear. One of his latest labours has been to translate Tennyson's 'Enoch Arden' very prettily. Indeed, in pretty writing he is unrivalled.

Andreas Munch fills up the interval of repose between the old political poetry and the new national school. For all their loud talk about patriotism, Wergeland and the rest had never thought of taking their inspiration from the deep well of national life around them, or from the wealth of old songs and sagas. But everything that was healthy

and rich in promise was to come from the inner heart of the nation, and the real future of Norwegian art was to be heralded not by Munch's love-sick sonnets, but by the folk-songs of Moe, the historical dramas of Ibsen, and the peasant romances of Björnsterne Björnsen. The man that opened the eyes of students and poets, and heralded this revolution in art, was not a poet himself, but a zoologist—P. C. Asbjörnsen.

This gifted man was born at Christiania in 1812; he early showed that bias for natural history which is so common among his countrymen, and, being of a brisk temperament, has spent most of his life in wandering over shallow seas, dredging and investigating. On this mission he sailed down the Mediterranean Sea, and has spent a long time in exploring the rich fields that lie before a zoologist on the coasts of Norway itself. But some part of every man's life has to be spent on shore, and these months Asbjörnsen dedicated to investigations of a very different kind; he searched among the peasants for stories. Just about that time there was a wide-spread desire to save the remnants of popular legend before it was too late. The Finnish scholars were collecting the Kalewala; the Russians were hunting up those wild songs of which Mr. Ralston has lately given us an English selection; Magyar and Servian poetry was being carefully amassed. It occurred to Asbjörnsen to do the same with the mythology of Norway. Starting from Bergen, he strolled through the magnificent passes of the Justedal and the Romsdal, drinking in the wild beauty of the scenery till it became part of his being, and gossiping with every peasant he could meet with. When a boatman ferried him across the dark fjord, he

would coax a story from him about the spirits that haunt the waters; the postboys had fantastic tales to tell about the trolls and the wood spirits; the old dames around the fire would murmur ancient rites and the horrors of bye-gone superstition. When the peasant was shy and would not speak, Asbjörnsen would tell a story himself, and that never failed to break the ice. When he had wandered long enough in the west, he crossed the Dovrefjeld, and explored the valleys of Österdal, lying along the border of Sweden. The results of his labours, and those of the poet Jörgen Moe, were published jointly in 1841, as 'Norske Folkeeventyr' ('Norwegian Popular Tales'), a book that made little impression at the time, but which has grown to be one of the bulwarks of Norwegian literature, and which, besides winning for its principal author a European fame, has had a profound influence on the younger poets of our day.

Dr. Jörgen Moe, now Bishop of Christianssand, whom we have just seen helping Asbjörnsen to collect folk-stories, is himself a poet of no mean order. His nature is not active and joyous like that of his associate; he would seem to be one of those diffident and sensitive natures, whose very delicacy prevents their pushing their way successfully into public notice. Violets, for all their ethereal perfume, are easily overlooked, and Jörgen Moe's works are as small, as unassuming, as exquisite as violets. The book he is best known by is a thin volume of poems, brought out in 1851; they have nothing about them to attract particular notice till one falls into the spirit of them, and then one is conscious of a wonderful melody, as of some Ariel out of sight —a sense of perfect, simple expression. The reader is transported to the pine-fringed valleys; he sees the peasants

at their daily work, he hears the cry of the waterfalls, and forgets all the humdrum existence that really lies about him. These verses have a power of quiet realism that is strangely refreshing; if anyone would know what Norway and its people really are, let them read Moe's little lyrical poems.

The following is far from being the best, but it is one of the most imitable of the collection.

SUMMER EVENING.

Now softly, lightly the evening dies,—
Gold-red upon headlands and waves without number,
And a soundless silence tenderly lies
And rocks all nature to dreamless slumber;
Meadow and dingle
Reflected, mingle
With waves that flash over sand and shingle
In one dim light.

Ah! slim is the fisherman's boat, and yet
High on the glittering wave it soars,
The fisherman bends to his laden net,
While the girls are hushed at the silent oars.
The soft emotion
From vale and ocean
Has quenched the noise of the day's commotion,
And bound it still.

And there stands one girl in a dream and sighs,
While up to the clear warm sky she glances,
But full of longing her young thought flies
To the Christmas games and the whirling dances;
The deep red blaze
Of the evening haze
Has thrown sparks farther than we can gaze—
She sees afar!

Thou rich and rose-coloured summer night,
Thou givest us more than the bright days bring;
O yield to Beauty the best delight,—

Let her dream come to her on gentle wing!
While her boat caresses
The low green nesses,
Lay the silver crown on her maiden tresses,
As a happy bride!'

In 1877 the Bishop of Christianssand issued his works in prose and verse, in two important volumes.

We now reach the name which stands highest among the poets of the new school, a star that is still in the ascendant, and on whom high hopes are built by all who desire the intellectual prosperity of Norway. Henrik Ibsen is a man who, through all difficulties from within and without, has slowly lifted himself higher and higher as an artist, and is now in the full swing of literary achievement. But I pass over the details of his career, since they form the entire subject of my next chapter.

Let us turn instead to his great rival and opponent. The name and fame of Björnstern Björnson have spread farther over the world's surface than that of any of his countrymen. Though he is still young, his works are admired and eagerly read all over the north of Europe, and are popular in America. It is as a romance writer that he has met with such unbounded distinction. Who has not read 'Arne,' and felt his heart beat faster with sympathy and delight? Who has not been refreshed by the simple story of the 'Fisher Girl'? It seemed as though every kind of story-writing had been abundantly tried, and as though a new novel must fall upon somewhat jaded ears. But in Björnson we discovered an author who was always simple and yet always enchanting; whose spirit was as masculine as a Viking's and as pure and tender as

[1] Appendix D.

a maiden's. Through these little romances there blows a wind as fragrant and refreshing as the odour of the Trondhjem balsam-willows, blown out to sea to welcome the new-comer; and just as this rare scent is the first thing that tells the traveller of Norway, so the purity of Björnson's *novelettes* is usually the first thing to attract a foreigner to Norwegian literature.

But it is only with his poems that we have here to do, and we must not be tempted aside into the analysis of his novels. They have, however, this claim on our attention, that they contain some of the loveliest songs in the language. 'Arne,' published in 1858, is particularly rich in these exquisite lyrics, full of a mountain melancholy, a delicate sadness native to the lives of solitary and sequestered persons. In almost all his early poems, Björnson dwells on the vague longing of youth, the hopeless dream of a blue rose in life. Here is one of the lovely songs that Arne sings, rendered as closely as I find it possible:—

Through the forest the boy wends all day long,
For there he has heard such a wonderful song.

He carved him a flute of the willow tree,
And tried what the tune within it might be.

The tune came out of it sad and gay,
But while he listened it passed away.

He fell asleep, and once more it sung,
And over his forehead it lovingly hung.

He thought he would catch it, and wildly woke,
And the tune in the pale night faded and broke.

'O God, my God, take me up to Thee,
For the tune Thou hast made is consuming me.'

And the Lord God said, ''Tis a friend divine,
Though never one hour shalt thou hold it thine.

Yet all other music is poor and thin
By the side of this which thou never shalt win!'[1]

While in his stories he deals with peasant life, so in his dramas he draws his afflatus from the rich hoard of antique sagas. 'Mellem Slagene' ('Between the Battles') was the first of these saga-plays. It is very fine. Two married folk—Halvard and Inga—once deeply in love with one another, begin mutually to tire, and to long, the man for the old wild, fighting life; the woman for her pleasant maiden days with her father. They get entangled in misconceptions, and a reserve creeping in on both sides parts them more and more. 'Silence slays more than sharp words do,' is the motto of the piece, a motto very suggestive to the undemonstrative people of the North. The two principal figures, and also that of King Sverre, are very keenly drawn. In 1858 there followed 'Halte Hulda' ('Lame Hulda'), the story of a girl who has lived to be four-and-twenty, loveless and unloved, full of grief and physically incapacitated by her lameness, and who suddenly falls into passionate and hopeless affection for a man she meets. Here again we have a dramatic situation, subtly chosen, original, and carefully worked out. 'Kong Sverre,' 1861, was the next of these saga-dramas, wherein the King Sverre, who acted a secondary part in 'Mellem Slagene,' becomes chief and centre of interest. Much of the latter, however, gathers around the bishop, Nicolaus, one of Björnson's most skilful pieces of figure-painting. 'Sigurd Slembe' (1862) closes the list of saga-dramas. The author turned next to modern

[1] Appendix E.

history, and published in 1864 'Maria Stuart i Skotland' ('Mary Stuart in Scotland'), a piece which unfortunately suggests comparison with Vondel, Schiller and Swinburne; it is written in prose. It could be wished that Björnson had chosen some less hackneyed subject. His next effort was in quite a different line; 'De Nygifte' ('The Newly-married Couple'), 1865, is a little prose comedy in high life. The hero, having fallen violently in love with a girl too young to understand his character, finds out too late that she has no notion of the responsibilities of married life, and still prefers her parents to himself. He tries to cure her by wrenching her suddenly from all old associations, and though she is very sullen for a while, he is victorious at last, and wins her love. Björnson has hardly allowed himself enough space in this little drama; the evolution of character is hurried by the shortness of the scenes; but it is nevertheless ably written. In 1869 he published a volume of Songs and Poems.

He now entered upon a second period, the end of which we have not yet seen, and the influence of which has, in my opinion, been extremely injurious to Björnson's reputation and to the literature of his country. He began his violent and jejune experiments in 1870, with the epic poem of 'Arnljot Gelline,' written in a jargon so uncouth that it is sometimes almost impossible to comprehend it. In the midst of its eccentricity and barbarism, however, there are certainly fine passages to be found in this poem, which deals with the fall of Olaf the Saint at the battle of Stiklestad. The section, in particular, called 'Arnljot's Longing for the Sea' is of the highest order of lyric poetry, and worthy of Byron at his best. In 1872 Björnson

tantalised and perplexed his readers with his saga-drama of Sigurd Jorsalfar,' a mere hasty sketch, with one magnificent scene in which Sigurd the Crusader, unannounced, presents himself, splendid and masculine, like a sea-eagle bathed in sunset colour, with the gold and silk of the East upon him, to Borghild, a noble woman long weary and ashamed with waiting for his love. The rest of the play is hurried and faulty; this single scene is Shakspearian. After a long silence, and much deplorable interference with the political factions of his fatherland, Björnson appeared in 1875 with two satirical comedies—'A Bankruptcy,' a poor piece, in the German taste, and 'The Editor,' a powerful but rabid and unjustifiable personal satire. Since then his ineptitudes have culminated in a democratic drama, 'The King,' a really monstrous fiasco, unworthy of a poet of high reputation as a work of art, and, politically speaking, beneath discussion. In 1877 he produced a clever, but sickly and chaotic novel, 'Magnhild.' Each step he takes at present seems to land him farther into provinciality and to betray fresh want of artistic tact.

Jonas Lie, whose novels of Norse life at sea rival Björnson's early mountain stories in popularity, has also written, but far less abundantly, in verse. He is indeed the author of a lyrical drama, 'Faustina Strozzi,' 1875, which contains, with certain unfortunate irregularities in form and design, some exquisite beauties of detail. He was born in 1833, and first came before the public with a volume of verses as late as 1867. His sea-stories take a very high rank, and his most successful novel, 'The Pilot and his Wife,' is perhaps the best sustained and the most accomplished romance that Norway has produced. In

1878 Lie published a curious and ingenious psychological study, 'Thomas Ross,' which has not quite the same charm as his simpler stories.

With this writer we will draw our survey of Norwegian poetry to a close. Nothing has been said here about the verse written in the dialect of the peasants, of which the great linguist Ivar Aasen (born in 1813), by moulding with the old Norse, has made a sort of new language. This peasant Norse has had a galvanic life imparted to it by the exertions of its inventor, and a good poet (K. Janson, born in 1841) has been found enthusiastic enough to write exclusively in it. The chief objection to the movement seems to be that it would make Norwegian literature more remote and undecipherable than ever; on the other hand, it is no doubt an advantage that the peasant should understand when he is preached to and written for. The creator of this language of the future, Aasen, is a man of high and versatile genius, and has himself contributed several poems to the new literature. For the rest its principal cultivators have been Vinje (1818-1870), the author, among other things, of a rather truculent book on English life, and Janson, who is a young writer of considerable activity. But this fancy language lies out of our province; if worth the consideration of Englishmen at all, it should be studied as a branch of philology.

We have now followed the literary life of this young nation for more than half a century. We have seen how the sudden political wrench, that divided it from its neighbour, gave it power to throw off the Danish influence and strike out a new path for itself. We have seen, too, how bravely, in spite of much weakness, and folly, and extrava-

gance, it succeeded in doing this, and in becoming self-reliant and healthily critical; how, when the age of criticism had sobered and moulded it, it ceased to look outwards for artistic impressions, but sought in its own heart and soul for high and touching themes. The reader who has followed the history of this development will hardly fail to allow that in the circumstances of this thinly peopled country of magnificent resources, whose youth is unexhausted by the effeminate life of towns and whose language is still fresh and unrifled, there lies a noble promise of intellectual vigour.

HENRIK IBSEN.

THERE is now living at Munich a middle-aged Norwegian gentleman, who walks in and out among the inhabitants of that gay city, observing all things, observed of few, retired, contemplative, unaggressive. Occasionally he sends a roll of MS. off to Copenhagen, and the Danish papers announce that a new poem of Ibsen's is about to appear. This announcement causes more stir than, perhaps, any other can, among literary circles in Scandinavia, and the elegant Swedish journalists point out how graceful an opportunity it would be for the illustrious poet to leave his voluntary exile, and return to be smothered in flowers and flowery speeches. Norwegian friends, expressing themselves more tersely, think that the greatest Norse writer ought to come home to live. Still, however, he remains in Germany, surrounded by the nationality least pleasing to his taste, within daily earshot of sentiments inexpressibly repugnant to him, watching, noting, digging deeper and deeper into the dark places of modern life, developing more and more a vast and sinister genius.

A land of dark forests, gloomy waters, barren peaks, inundated by cold sharp airs off Arctic icebergs, a land

where Nature must be won with violence, not wooed by the siren-songs of dream-impulses; Norway is the home of vigorous, ruddy lads and modest maidens, a healthy population, unexhausted and unrestrained. Here a man can open his chest, stride onward upright and sturdy, say out his honest word and be unabashed; here, if anywhere, human nature may hope to find a just development. And out of this young and sturdy nation two writers have arisen who wear laurels on their brows and are smiled on by Apollo. Björnson is well known, by this time, to many Englishmen: he represents the happy buoyant side of the life of his fatherland; he is what one would naturally expect a Norwegian author to be—rough, manly, unpolished, a young Titan rejoicing in his animal spirits. Ibsen, on the other hand, is a quite unexpected product of the mountain-lands, a typical modern European, a soul full of doubt and sorrow and unfulfilled desire, piercing downward into the dark, profound, Promethean—a dramatic satirist.

Modern life is a thing too complex and too delicate to bear such satire as thrilled through the fierce old world. In Ezekiel we see the thunders and lightnings of the Lord blasting the beautiful evil body of Aholah; in Juvenal, the iron clank of horse-hoofs is ringing on the marble pavement, till, in crushing some wretched debauchee, they mingle his blood with the spilt wine and the vine-wreaths. But neither divine nor human invective of this sort is possible now—it would not cure but kill. Modern satire laughs while it attacks, and takes care that the spear-shaft shall be covered up in roses. Whether it be Ulrich von Hutten, or Pope, or Voltaire, the same new element of finesse is to be found; and if a Marston rises up as a

would-be Juvenal, the world just shrugs its shoulders and forgets him. As the ages bring in their advancements in civilisation and refinement, the rough old satire becomes increasingly impossible, till a namby-pamby generation threatens to loathe it altogether as having 'no pity in it.' The writings of Ibsen form the last and most polished phase of this slow development, and exhibit a picture of life so perfect in its smiling sarcasm and deliberate anatomy, that one accepts it at once as the distinct portraiture of one of the foremost spirits of an age. Ibsen has many golden arrows in his quiver, and he stands, cold and serene, between the dawn and the darkness, shooting them one by one into the valley below, each truly aimed at some folly, some affectation, in the every-day life we lead.

Henrik Ibsen was born on March 20, 1828, at Skien, a small market town on the sea in the south-east of Norway. He began active life as an apothecary, with a joyous and fermenting brain, a small stock of knowledge and a still smaller stock of money. But poetry and scholarship were dearer to him than all things, and it is easy to conceive that the small world of Skien became intolerable to him. He wrote a tragedy, and met with a Mæcenas who would publish it; and, after some delay, there appeared at Christiania, in 1850, 'Catiline,' a drama in three acts, by Brynjolf Bjarme. Under this uncouth pseudonym a new poet concealed himself, but the public were none the wiser, and only thirty copies were sold. 'Catiline' is the work of a boy; it is marked by all the erotic and revolutionary extravagances usual in the efforts of youths of twenty. The iambic verses are very bad; the writer has evidently read little, and scarcely thought at all, but there is a certain

vigour running through it which seduces one into reading it despite one's self. With this precious production under his arm, Ibsen came to the capital in 1851, and began to study at the University. He never attained to a very splendid career—there he began too late for that—but he did fairly well, being well-grounded in Latin. 'Catiline' shows that he had read his Sallust well in the old days at Skien. At the University he fell in with a clique of lads of earnest mind and good intelligence, several of whom have made a name in literature; Björnson was there and Vinje, called the Peasant; Botten-Hansen, the bibliographer; and Frithjof Foss, the novelist. These young contemporaries schemed nothing less than an entire revolution in literature. They began to set about it by founding a newspaper, called, I do not know why, 'Andhrimner,' which professed the same critical independence, and shared the same early fate, as the celebrated 'Germ' among ourselves. 'Andhrimner' was published by Botten-Hansen, Ibsen, and Vinje, and contained nothing but original poetry, criticism, and æsthetics. After a sickly existence of nine months, it went out. Among Ibsen's numerous contributions was a long drama, 'Norma, or a Politician's Love,' a most impertinent lampoon on the honourable members of his Majesty's Storthing, of which the first act is said to be in extremely witty and delicate verse. But 'Andhrimner' has become a great rarity, a bibliographical prize, and I have never seen it. When it ceased in 1851, Ibsen was so fortunate as to meet with a gifted man who at once perceived his genius, Ole Bull, the great violinist. At his intercession Ibsen became director of the theatre at Bergen, and held the post till 1857. In

1852 he travelled in Denmark and Germany, met Heiberg, the great poet-critic, at Copenhagen, and came back mightily dissatisfied with Norway and himself. The theatre was a source of constant vexation to him, and during the six years he spent at Bergen his genius seems to have been in some degree under a cloud. He wrote a great deal while he was there, but most of it has been destroyed, and what remains is unworthy of him; he produced two or three plays on his own stage, but would not print or preserve them; one little piece which he did print as a feuilleton to a Bergen paper in 1854 was rather flimsy in texture. In 1857 the younger poet, Björnson, took the direction of the Bergen house, and Ibsen came up to Christiania to direct the National Theatre there. He was now almost thirty years of age, and had not written one great work; it is often the loftiest minds that attain manhood most slowly. May-flies reach perfection in a day and another day sees their extinction, while great souls strengthen themselves in a long-drawn adolescence. But our poet had finished his chrysalis-life at last. For the next seven years he produced several historical dramas of great and increasing merit; but I do not purpose at present to speak of these, nor of his political or miscellaneous poems, but only of his three great satires. And forthwith let us pass to them.

It was not till 1863 that Ibsen discovered the natural bent of his genius. Until that year no one could tell that he was born to be a satirist. Now, after reading his great latter poems, one can perceive traces of that lofty invective, which was to be his final culmination, even in the earlier and purely historical dramas. But when 'Kjærlighedens

Komedie' (Love's Comedy,) a satirical play of our own generation, first appeared in Norway, there were very few among the poet's admirers to whom it was not a great surprise to find him to be a master of so entirely new a style. The older pieces, being hewn out of an antique and lovely source, were fittingly robed in terse prose; this, being concerned with the prosaic trivialities of to-day, needed and received all the delicate finish of epigrammatic verse. The original is written in rhyme, but I have translated into blank verse; a rhymed play being a shocking thing to English readers since Dryden's day, whereas it is still a familiar phenomenon in the classic literature of Scandinavia. The scene of 'Love's Comedy' is laid in a garden in the suburbs of Christiania, in the summer-time. A Mrs. Halm, a widow, having a large house, takes in lodgers, among whom are Hawk, the hero, and Lind, a theological student. Hawk, a young poet brimming over with revolutionary theories and revolting with his whole soul against the conventionality of the day with regard to amatory and æsthetic matters, has determined to give his life to the destruction of what is false and sterile in modern society. As it happens, the present moment is opportune for commencing the attack. At Mrs. Halm's there is gathered a congregation of Philistines of all sorts, and love, so-called, is the order of the day. Unsuspicious of his intentions, the various pseudo-lovers sport and intrigue around him in what seems to him an orgy of hideous dulness and impotent conventionality. His scorn is lambent at first, a laughing flame of derision; but it rises by degrees into a tongue of lashing, scathing fire that bursts all bonds of decorum. The scene opens in the evening, while the party sit about on the grass. Hawk

has been asked to sing his last new song, and thus he proclaims the *carpe diem* that is his ideal :—

In the sunny orchard-closes,
While the warblers sing and swing,
Care not whether blustering Autumn
Break the promises of Spring ;
Rose and white the apple-blossom
Hides you from the sultry sky ;
Let it flutter, blown and scattered,
On the meadows by-and-by.

Will you ask about the fruitage
In the season of the flowers ?
Will you murmur, will you question,
Count the tun of weary hours ?
Will you let the scarecrow clapping
Drown all happy sounds and words ?
Brothers, there is better music
In the singing of the birds !

From your heavy laden garden
Will you hunt the mellow thrush ?
He will pay you for protection
With his crown-song's liquid rush !
O ! but you will win the bargain,
Though your fruit be spare and late,
For remember, Time is flying,
And will shut your garden-gate.

With my living, with my singing,
I will tear the hedges down !
Sweep the grass and heap the blossom,
Let it shrivel, pale and brown !
Swing the wicket ! Sheep and cattle,
Let them graze among the best !
I broke off the flowers ; what matter
Who may revel with the rest ![1]

This song wakens a good deal of discussion. The ladies are against it on the score of economy ; the gentlemen

[1] Appendix F.

think the idea very good in theory. The first person who rubs against Hawk's susceptibilities is Stiver, a dull clerk, who is engaged in due form to a Miss Magpie, who is present. This Stiver confesses to have written verses.

Stiver. Not now, you know! all that was long ago,—
Was when I was a lover.
Hawk. Is that past?
Is the wine-frenzy of your love slept off?
Stiver. Oh! now I am officially engaged,
And that is more than being in love, I think![1]

Some one speaks about 'next' Spring, and Hawk expresses his hatred of 'that wretched word':—

Hawk. It makes the shareholders of pleasure bankrupt!
If I were only Sultan for an hour,
A running noose about its coward neck
Should make it bid the joyous world good-bye!
Stiver. What is your quarrel with the hopeful word?
Hawk. This,—that it darkens for us God's fair world!
In 'our next love' and 'when we marry next,'
In 'our next mealtime' and in our 'next life,'
'Tis the anticipation in the word,
'Tis that that beggars so the sons of Joy,
That makes our modern life so hard and cold,
That slays enjoyment in the living Present.
You have no rest until your shallop strikes
Against the shingle of the 'next' design,
And, that accomplisht, there is still a 'next,'
And so in toil and hurry, toil and pain,
The years slip by and you slip out of life,—
God only knows if there is rest beyond.
Miss Magpie. How can you talk in that way, Mr. Hawk?
My sweetheart must not hear a word you say!
He's only too eccentric now! [*to Stiver*] My love!
Come here a moment!
Stiver [*languidly and stooping to clean his pipe*] I am coming, dear![2]

From the prosaic Stiver, for whom engagement has

[1] Appendix G. [2] Appendix H.

robbed love of its charm, we turn to Lind, who is in all the delicious ecstasy of a passion returned but unproclaimed. Referring to Lind's temporary glamour of poetical feeling, Hawk remarks that you can always 'stuff a prosing fool,—

> As pitilessly as a Strasburg goose,
> With rhyming nonsense and with rhythmic humbug,
> Until his lights and liver, mind and soul
> (But turn him inside out), are found quite full
> Of lyric fat and crumbs of rhetoric.[1]

The company, becoming piqued, turn upon him, and charge him with neglecting poetry; they suggest that he should shut himself up in an arbour of roses, and then he is sure to be inspired. He replies that the enjoyment of nature unrestrained prevents the creation of poetry; that the imaginative beauty thrives best in an imprisoned soul.

> Cover my eyeballs with the mould of blindness,
> And I will celebrate the lustrous heavens;
> Or give me for a month, in some grim tower,
> A pang, an anguish or a giant sorrow,
> And I will sing the jubilee of life;
> Or else, Miss Magpie, give me just a bride!

They all cry out upon him, Love's blasphemer, for he exclaims that he desires a bride, that—he may lose her.

> For in the very Bacchic feast of fortune
> She might be caught into eternity.
> I need a little spiritual athletics:
> Who knows how such a loss might strengthen me![2]

At this moment the two sensible people of the drama interpose—Svanhild, who is the only woman with a soul in the piece, and Guldstad, a sober merchant. Svanhild proposes a high spiritual aim for Hawk; Guldstad proposes to drive off his 'morbid fancies' with a little manual labour. Hawk replies:—

[1] Appendix I. [2] Appendix J.

I'm like a donkey bound between two stalls;
The left hand gives me flesh, the right hand spirit;
I wonder which 'twere wisest to choose first!

Then is introduced the third pair of pseudo-lovers—the Rev. Mr. Strawman, an uxorious priest with an enormous family, who exemplifies the worst type of the great parody of love. The description of his early life, romantic wooing, disappointed aims, are most amusingly given in brisk and witty dialogue, Hawk sneering ever more bitterly as the description proceeds. The wooing of Mr. Strawman was most sentimental:

He loved her to the tones of his guitar,
And she responded on the harpsichord,
And first they lived on credit.

Among the troop of old and young gathered around him, it is in Lind's amour only that Hawk can take pleasure. Lind and Anna love one another, and no one but themselves and Hawk have guessed it. Suddenly Hawk is horrified by a suspicion that it is Svanhild that Lind loves. He turns away angry, and sick at heart. True love, reserved, tender, genuine, is not to be found; the whole world is old and sterile; all good impulses and hopes are dead. This he says to Svanhild when they are alone, and she upbraids him with dreamy insincerity.

Svan. Last year the Faith in Syria was menaced;
Did you go out, a warrior for the Cross?
Oh! no; on paper you were warm enough,
And sent a dollar when the 'Church Times' asked it!
[*Hawk walks up and down.*]
Hawk, are you angry?

Hawk. No, but I am musing.
See, that is all!

Svan. You have two different natures,
And each unlike—

Hawk. Oh yes! I know it well!
Svan. What is the reason?
Hawk. Reason? That I hate
To go about with all my soul uncovered,
And, like good people's love, a common thing,—
To go about with all my heart's warmth bare,
As women go about with naked arms!
You were the only one—you, Svanhild, you—
I thought so, once—but ah! all that is past—
[*She turns and gazes.*]
You listen—?
Svan. To another voice that speaks!
Hush! every evening when the sun goes down
A little bird comes flying—do you hear?—
Ah! see, it flits out of the leafy shade—
Now, can you guess what I believe and hold?
To every soul that lacks the singing gift
God sends a little tender bird as friend,—
For it created and for its own garden!
Hawk [*takes up a stone*].
Then if the bird and soul can never meet,
The song is never fluted out elsewhere?
Svan. No, that is true! But I have found my bird.
I have no gift of tongues, no singer's voice,
But when my sweet bird warbles from its bough,
A poem seems to well up in my heart,—
But ah! the poem fades away and dies!
[*Hawk throws the stone. Svanhild screams.*]
Oh God! you struck it! Oh! what have you done!
Oh! That was wicked, shameful!
Hawk. [*passionately agitated*] Eye for eye,
And tooth for tooth, pure legal justice, Svanhild.
Now no one greets you longer from on high,
And no more gifts come from the land of song.
See, that is my revenge for your ill deed!
Svan. For my ill deed?
Hawk. Yes, yours! Until this hour
A singing-bird was warbling in my breast.
Ah! now the bell may chime above them both,
For you have killed it!
Svan. Have I?

Hawk. Yes, you struck
My young and joyous conquering faith to earth
When you betrothed yourself![1]

Then she explains that Anna is really Lind's beloved. Hawk now is interested again in this affair, until Lind declares that he will publish the news, that they may be regularly engaged. Hawk shows this step to be suicidal; but Lind persists. The new couple are received with acclamation by the pseudo-lovers, to Hawk's infinite disgust. He cries to the company:—

Hurrah! Miss Magpie, like a trumpet, tells you,
A brother has been born to you in Amor!

the result being that the new couple are smothered in and nauseated with congratulations. Here is the description of Strawman and his wife:—

He also was a man of courage once,
And fought the world to win himself a woman;
He sacked the churches of society;
His love burst into flower of passionate song!
Look at him now! In long funereal robes
He acts the drama of the Fall of Man!
And look, that female of gaunt petticoat,
And twisted shoes, down-trodden at the heel,
She was the winged maiden, who should lead
His spirit into fellowship with beauty!
And what is left of love's pure flame?—The smoke!—
Sic transit gloria amoris, Svanhild![2]

In utter desperation, Hawk proposes to throw everything to the winds, and leave modern society to rot into its grave. The only pure spirit he can find is Svanhild, and he tries to persuade her to revolt with him.

[1] Appendix K. [2] Appendix L.

We will not, like this trivial congregation,
Attend the church of dulness any more.
The aim and scope of individual labour
Is just to stand consistent, true and free.[1]

But he expresses too much. Svanhild conceives the idea that he is wooing her only that she may be a means to the attainment of his ideal.

You look at me as children on a reed,
A hollow thing to cut into a flute,
And pipe upon awhile and throw away.

They part coldly, and the curtain goes down upon Hawk's boundless depression and dismay.

The second act is a day later in time. On Sunday afternoon a whole troop of friends, all intense Philistines, come down to Mrs. Halm's, and hold what Hawk calls 'a Bacchanalian feast of tea and prose.' Lind and Anna are beginning to be weary of their love; now that all the world expects them to be ardent, the charm of the mysterious passion is gone. All the three couples—the fat priest and his spouse, the clerk and Miss Magpie, and those most newly betrothed—become more and more ludicrously dull, and Hawk, waxing more and more angry, mutters,—

See how they kill the poetry of Love!

But we must hurry to the close, giving only one out of the exquisite and sparkling scenes. Hawk has gathered everyone round him, and each person has mentioned some herb or flower that is like love, and at last it is his turn:—

Hawk. As many heads as fancies! Very good!
But all of you have blundered more or less;

[1] Appendix M.

Each simile is crooked; now, hear mine,
Then turn and twist it any way you wish!
Far in the dreamy East there grows a plant
Whose native home is the Sun's Cousin's garden—

All the Ladies. Oh! it is tea!

Hawk. It is!

The Ladies. To think of tea!

Hawk. Its home lies far in the Valley of Romance,
A thousand miles beyond the wilderness!
Fill up my cup! I thank you! Let us have
On tea and love a good tea-table talk,
[*They gather round him.*]
It has its home away in Fableland,
Alas! and there, too, is the home of Love.
Only the children of the Sun, we know,
Can cultivate the herb or tend it well,
And even so it is with Love, my friends:
A drop of sun-blood needs must circulate
Through our dull veins, before the passionate Love
Can root itself, or shoot and blossom forth.

. . . . . .

Miss Magpie. But love and love are everywhere the same;
Tea has varieties and qualities.

Mrs. Strawman. Yes, tea is bad or good or pretty good.

Anna. The young green shoots are thought the best of all.

Svanhild. That kind is only for the Sun's bright Daughters.

A Young Lady. They say that it intoxicates like ether!

Another. Fragrant as lotus and as sweet as almond!

Guldstad. That kind of import never reaches us!

Hawk. I think that in his nature everyone
Has got a little 'Heavenly Empire' in him
Where, on the twigs, a thousand such sweet buds
Form under shadow of that falling Wall
Of China, bashfulness; where, underneath
The shelter of the quaint kiosk, there sigh
A troop of Fancy's little China dolls,
Who dream and dream, with damask round their loins,
And in their hands a golden tulip-flower.
The first-fruits of Love's harvest were for them,
And we just have the rubbish and the stalks.

. . . . .

And now the last point of similitude:—

See how the hand of culture presses down
The 'Heavenly Empire' out in the far East;
Its great Wall moulders and its strength is gone,
The last of genuine mandarins is hanged,
And foreign devils gather in the crops.
Soon the whole thing will merely be a legend,
A wonder-story nobody believes:
The whole wide world is painted gray on gray,
And Wonderland for ever is gone past.
But have we Love? Oh! where, oh! where is Love?
Nay, Love is also banished out of sight.
But let us bow before the age we live in!
Drink, drink in tea to Love discrowned and dead![1]

There is intense indignation among the pseudo-lovers, and Hawk is driven out of their society, scarcely saved from the fate of Orpheus. Svanhild comes out to him, and for a little while they enjoy the exquisite pleasure of true and honest love. But, to hasten to the end, Hawk discovers that marriage would destroy the bloom and beauty of this sweet passion. He dreads a time when Svanhild will no longer inspire and glorify him, and the poem ends in a most tragical manner by the separation for ever of the only two hearts strong enough to shake off the trammels of conventionality. The Age weighs too heavily upon even them, and, to spare themselves future agony, they tear themselves apart while the bond is still fresh and tender between them.

The whole poem—its very title of 'Love's Comedy'—is a piece of elaborate irony. We may believe that it is rather Svanhild than the extravagant Hawk who speaks the poet's mind. It is impossible to express in brief quotation the perfection of faultless verse, the epigrammatic lancet-thrusts of wit, the boundless riot of mirth

[1] Appendix N.

that make a lyrical saturnalia in this astonishing drama. A complete translation alone could give a shadow of the force of the original.

In 1864 Ibsen left Norway, and, as far as I know, has only once re-entered it. For a long while he was domiciled in Rome, and while there he wrote the book which has popularised his name most thoroughly. It seemed as though the poetical genius in him expanded and developed in the intellectual atmosphere of Rome. It is not that 'Brand' is more harmonious in conception than the earlier works—for let it be distinctly stated, Ibsen never attains to repose or perfect harmony—but the scope was larger, the aim more Titanic, the moral and mental horizon wider than ever before. Brand, the hero of the book, is a priest in the Norwegian Church; the temper of his mind is earnest to the point of fanaticism, consistent beyond the limits of tenderness and humanity. He will have all or nothing, no Sapphira-dividings or Ananias-equivocations—the whole heart must be given or all is void. He is sent for to attend a dying man, but in order to reach him he must cross the raging Fjord in a small boat. So high is the storm, that no one dares go with him: but just as he is pushing off alone, Agnes, a young girl of heroic temperament who has been conquered by his intensity, leaps in with him, and they safely row across. Brand becomes priest of the parish, and Agnes, in whose soul he finds everything that his own demands, becomes his wife. In process of time a son is born to him. The physician declares that unless they move to some healthier spot—the parish is a noisome glen that does not see the sun for half the year—the babe must

die. Brand, believing that duty obliges him to stay at his post, will not leave it. His child dies, and the mother dies; Brand is left alone. At last his mother comes to live with him, a worldly woman with a frivolous heart; she will not submit to his religious supremacy, and dies unblessed and unannealed. Her property now falls into Brand's hands, and he dedicates it all to the rebuilding of the church. The satire now turns on the life in the village; the portraits of the various officers, schoolmaster, bailiff, and the rest, are incisively and scathingly drawn. All society is reviled for its universal worldliness, laziness, and lukewarmness. At last the church is finished. Brand, with the keys in his hand, stands on the doorstep and harangues the people. His sermon is a philippic of the bitterest sort; all the wormwood of disappointed desire for good, all the burning sense of useless sacrifice, vain offerings of heart and breath to a thankless generation, all is summed up in a splendid outburst of invective. In the end he throws the keys far out into the river, and flies up the mountain-side away into desolation and solitude.[1] As a piece of artistic work, 'Brand' is most wonderful; a drama of nearly three hundred pages, written in short rhymed lines, sometimes rhyming four or five times, and never flagging in energy or interest, is a wonder in itself. Eight large editions of this book have been sold—a greater success than any other work of the poet has attained. A very great number of copies were bought in Denmark, where, just now, religious writing is at the height of fashion, and doubtless the subject of

[1] The similarity of this plot to that of Sydney Dobell's 'Balder,' published twelve years earlier, is worthy of note.

'Brand' accounts in some measure for its extraordinary popularity in that country. The verse in which it is written is a finished and lovely work of a high lyrical order.

The following song has attained a special popularity throughout Scandinavia :—

Einar. Agnes, my exquisite butterfly,
I will catch you sporting and winging ;
I am weaving a net with meshes small,
And the meshes are my singing.

Agnes. If I am a butterfly, tender and small,
From the heather-bells do not snatch me ;
But since you are a boy, and are fond of a game,
You may hunt, though you must not catch me

Einar. Agnes, my exquisite butterfly,
The meshes are all spun ready ;
It will help you nothing to flutter and flap :
You are caught in the net already.

Agnes. That I am a butterfly, bright and young,
A swinging butterfly, say you?
Then ah! if you catch me under your net,
Don't crush my wings, I pray you!

Einar. No! I will daintily lift you up,
And shut you into my breast ;
There you may shelter the whole of your life,
Or play, as you love best.[1]

It was among the lemon-groves of Ischia, under the torrid glare of an Italian summer, that Ibsen began his next, and, as I believe, greatest work. There is no trace of the azure munificence of sea and sky in the luxurious and sultry South, about 'Peer Gynt;' it is the most exclusively Norwegian of his poems in scenery and feeling. Strange that in the 'pumice isle,' with the crystalline waves of the Mediterranean lapping around him, far

[1] Appendix O.

removed from home faces and home influences, he could shape into such perfect form a picture of rough Norse life by fjord and fjeld. 'Peer Gynt' takes its name from its hero, an idle fellow whose aim is to live his own life, and whose chief characteristics are a knack for story-telling and a dominant passion for lies. It is the converse of 'Brand;' for while that drama strove to wake the nation into earnestness by holding up before it an ideal of stainless virtue, 'Peer Gynt' idealises in the character of its hero the selfishness and mean cunning of the worst of ambitious men. In form, this poem, like the preceding, is written in a variety of lyrical measures, in short rhyming lines; but there is a brilliant audacity, a splendour of tumultuous melody, that 'Brand' seldom attained to. Ibsen has written nothing so sonorous as some of the passages in 'Peer Gynt.'

The hero is first introduced to us as playing a rough practical joke on his mother; he is a rude shaggy lad of violent instincts and utter lawlessness of mind. We find him attending a wedding, and, after dancing with the bride, snatching her up and running up the mountain-side with her. Then he leaves her to make her way down again ignominiously. For this ill deed he is outlawed, and lives in the caves of the Dovrefjeld, haunted by strange spirits, harassed by weird sensualities and fierce hallucinations. The atmosphere of this part of the drama is ghostly and wild; the horrible dreams of the great lad are shown as incarnate but shadowy entities. He grows a man among the mountains, and is introduced to the King of the Trolds, who urges him to marry his daughter and settle among them. Under the figure of the Trolds, the

party in Norway which demands commercial isolation and monopoly for home products is most acutely satirised. At last Peer Gynt slips down to the sea-shore and embarks for America. These events, and many more, take up the first three acts, which almost form a complete poem in themselves; these acts contain little satire, but a humorous and vivid picture of Norse manners and character. To a foreigner who knows a little of Norway and would fain know more, these acts of 'Peer Gynt' are a delicious feast. Through them he is brought face to face with the honest merry peasants, and behind all is a magnificent landscape of mountain, forest, and waterfall.

With the fourth act there is a complete shifting of motive, time, place, and style. We are transported, after a lapse of twenty years, to the coast of Moroeco, where Peer Gynt, a most elegant middle-aged gentleman, entertains a select party of friends on the sea-shore. He has been heaping up fortune in America; he has traded 'in stockings, Bibles, rum and rice,' but most of all in negro slaves to Carolina and heathen gods to China. In short, he is a full-blown successful humbug, unscrupulous and selfish to the last degree. While he is asleep, his friends run off with his yacht, and are blown up by an explosion into thin air. He is left alone and penniless on the African shore. He crosses the desert and meets with endless adventures: each adventure is a clear-cut jewel of satire. Here is a subtle lampoon on the way in which silly people hail each new boaster as the Man of the Future, and worship the idol themselves have built up. Peer—the bubble, the humbug—appears in an Arab camp, and is received as a manifestation of the divine Muham-

mad himself. A chorus of girls do homage to him, led on by Anitra, the very type of a hero-hunting woman:—

Chorus. The Prophet is come!
The Prophet, the Master, the all-providing,
To us, to us, is he come,
Over the sand-sea riding!
The Prophet, the Master, the never-failing,
To us, to us, is he come,
Through the sand-sea sailing.
Sound the flute and the drum;
The Prophet, the Prophet is come!

Anitra. His steed was the milk-white flood
That streams through the rivers of Paradise;
His hair is fire and stars are his eyes,
So bend the knee! Let your heads be bowed!
No child of earth can bear,
His starry face and his flaming hair!
Over the desert he came.
Out of his breast sprang gold like flame.
Before him the land was light,
Behind him was night;
Behind him went drought and dearth.
He, the majestic, is come!
Over the desert is come!
Robed like a child of earth.
Kaaba, Kaaba stands dumb,
Forlorn of its lord and light.

Chorus. Sound the flute and the drum;
The Prophet, the Prophet is come![1]

Another episode introduces one of those ill-advised persons who strive to prevent the use of classical Danish in Norway, and substitute for it a barbarous language collected orally from among the peasants—a harsh, shapeless, and unnatural jargon. One of these writers is introduced to Peer in Egypt; he is flying westwards, seeking for an asylum for his theories. He tries to win Peer Gynt's sympathy thus:—

[1] Appendix P.

[redacted] afar
Stands the coast of Malabar.
Europe like a hungry vulture
Overpowers the land with culture,
For the Dutch and Portuguese
Hold the country at their ease.
Where the natives once held sway,
Now their chiefs are driven away;
And the new lords have combined
In a language to their mind.
In the olden days long fled,
Th' Ourang-Outang was lord and head,
He was chief by wood and flood,
Snared and slaughtered as he would;
As the hand of nature shaped,
So he grinned and so he gaped;
Unabashed he howled and yelled,
For the reins of state he held.
Out alas! for Progress came,
And destroyed his name and fame;
All the monkey-men with ears
Vanished for four hundred years;
If we now would preach or teach,
We must use the help of speech.
I alone have striven hard
To become a monkey-bard;
I have vivified the dream,
Proved the people's right to scream,
Screamed myself, and, by inditing,
Showed its use in folk-song-writing.
Oh! that I could make men see
The bliss of being apes like me![1]

It is said that these lines have had a greater effect in stopping the movement than all denunciations of learned professors and the indignation of philologists.

Between the fourth and fifth acts twenty years more elapse. Peer wins a new fortune in California, and finally comes back to Norway to enjoy it. The opening scene.

[1] Appendix Q.

carries us up one of the perilous passages on the Norse coast, a storm meanwhile rising and at last breaking on the ship. All hands are lost save Peer, who finds himself in his fatherland again, but penniless and friendless. Solvejg, a woman who has constantly and unweariedly loved him all his life, receives him into her cottage, and he dies in her arms as she sings a dream-song over him.

'Love's Comedy,' 'Brand,' and 'Peer Gynt,' despite their varied plots, form a great satiric trilogy—perhaps for sustained vigour of expression, for affluence of execution, and for brilliance of dialogue, the greatest of modern times. They form at present Ibsen's principal and foremost claim to immortality; their influence over thought in the North has been boundless, and sooner or later they will win for their author the homage of Europe. He has also published two very successful satiric comedies, 'The Young Men's Union' in 1869, and 'The Pillars of Society' in 1877. The former is a comedy in prose, the scene of which is laid in a little country town, perhaps Skien being meant, to judge by certain hints; the subject-matter is taken from the ordinary political life in the provinces, and a good deal of airy satire is expended on the frivolity and short-sightedness of embryo politicians. The interest centres around a young lawyer, gifted with some brains, no tact, and boundless impudence, who builds up for himself a dream of successful ambition, and has it tumbled about his ears like a house of cards in the fifth act. This young man, Stensgaard, tries to win the sympathy of the lower classes, and especially of the turbulent youth, by denouncing the proprietary class. But by an accident he gets admitted himself

into the society [illegible]istocracy, and might, if he had a grain of [illegible]article of sound sense, hew out a path fro[illegible]vation. But he must needs grasp all, and [illegible] He forms a *Forbund* or Union, a collec[illegible]men that meet to drink a health to Freedom, sing odes to Old Norway, and celebrate the 17th of May, the day of the independence of Norway. These absurdities were once a serious weakness to the State, but now they are banished from rational society, and are only cultivated in such crude assemblies as those our poet satirises. But Stensgaard, with shallow cunning, tries to manœuvre for the support of both classes, and as the election times are approaching, he determines to canvas for a place in the Storthing. At the same time he urges a love-suit on three ladies at once, or rather by turns. To the least experienced playgoer it will be obvious that this complicated intrigue gives opportunity for plenty of comical incident, and accordingly the young lawyer builds his castles in the air for awhile, till the political and amatory schemes are ripe, and then in a very amusing final scene all his tricks are exposed, and he himself vanishes into thin air. The dialogue is everywhere sprightly, and its limpid flow is seldom interrupted by those metaphysical subtleties which are the poet's too great delight. In the character of Stensgaard, Ibsen is more than half suspected of laughing at his rival Björnson, whose political freaks were, about the time when this play was produced, exciting remark for the first time.

Not a few of the critics of the great poet ventured to hope that he would select for his next work a subject less local than those purely Norwegian scenes which he was

accustomed to draw, and which, however brilliantly painted, were to the world at large of comparatively trivial importance. In 1873 he appeared to respond to this hope in publishing a work of great ambition, the theme of which had certainly a European and a universal interest. This book, originally projected, according to report, as a trilogy, actually consists of two dramas of unusual length, and covering together the period intervening between A.D. 351 and A.D. 363,—that is, from the adolescence to the death of Julian the Apostate.

The subject undoubtedly is a very momentous and tragical one. It concerns itself with the effort of a single brain to carry into effect a kind of religious Renaissance, in opposition to that form of political Christianity which had just found a firm footing in the whole Roman Empire. All the great tragedies that art has known are engaged with the struggle of a gifted and noble nature against an invincible force to which it is wholly antipathetic. From Prometheus to Faust, the great tragical figures of poetry have rung the changes on this theme. Ibsen has rightly judged that Julian's struggle against Christ, seen in the light of his slight apparent success and final ruin, collects around it ideas fit for a high philosophical tragedy. In effect he has hardly hit as high as he aimed; 'Kejser og Galilæer' ('Emperor and Galilean') is a work full of power and interest, studded with lofty passages, but not a complete poem. But before discussing the causes of this partial failure, we will briefly analyse the method in which one of the finest minds in Europe has chosen to bring before us the story itself.

The first of the two dramas is entitled 'Julian's Apos-

tasy.' The ac[illegible] onstantinople. We are introduced to on[illegible] que, vivid scenes that Ibsen understands so [illegible] nipulate. It is Easter, and outside the ch[illegible] at throng of citizens is waiting to see the [illegible] ntius II. go in state to mass. Before he appears, the bystanders, who have in the beginning united in beating a few stray pagans, begin to quarrel among themselves, Manichæans against Donatists, with furious abuse. In this way, at the very opening, the rotten state of doctrine in professing Christendom is laid bare: the chaos of raving schismatics and godless heretics that grouped themselves as Christians in the eyes of men like Julian is made patent to the reader. Constantius, timid, morbid, and moribund, makes his way through the crowd, accompanied by his courtiers, and amongst them Julian, the friendless kinsman whose parents he has murdered. Julian is rather suggested than sketched as a nervous, intellectual youth, of wavering temperament and almost hysterical excitement of brain. A lad of his own age, a healthy young Cappadocian whom Julian in earlier years has converted to Christianity, comes out of the crowd to greet him. They pass away together, and in their dialogue the poet finds occasion to unveil to us the condition of Julian's mind and soul. He has become conscious that a kind of classic revival is being suggested around him, and he is angry at being kept out of the way of it. He hopes to secure his own tottering faith by arguing with the men who are trying to restore the old philosophy. He accidentally meets the most active of these new teachers, Libanios, who is starting to found a new school at Athens. Julian obtains leave to go to Pergamos, hoping from thence

to steal off to Athens, and stand face to face with the dreaded Libanios. In this act Julian is still a Christian, but the self-consciousness of his assertions of faith reveals the tottering basis on which it rests. He is wavering; circumstances and the age are against him, but as yet his difficulties are rather emotional and moral than intellectual.

The second act reveals Julian in the midst of the new school at Athens. He has made a melancholy discovery: 'The old beauty is no longer beautiful, and the new truth is no longer true.' The efforts of the young apostates to restore the insouciance of classic times has resulted in mere bestial excess; Aphrodite and Iacchus are gods no longer, and to Julian the Christ also is a god no longer. A new change has come over him. He finds no rest in the sceptical science; the new philosophers are ambitious, greedy, impure persons, and yet he cannot return to the fold of Christianity. The old religion rots in its open grave, and the new religion seems to him to be false and cold and timid. Libanios disgusts him; he hears of magical arts practised at Ephesus, very much as we now-a-days hear of spirit-rapping, and he starts off in the hope of a new revelation and a new creed.

The next act is in the highest degree theatrical, but there is but little development of purpose. Julian is discovered at Ephesus, under the influence of a new teacher, Maximos the mystic. There is a great magic-scene, in which, to the sound of unseen instruments and under the flicker of resinous torches, a wild ceremony of incantation is gone through. Strange shadows cross the scene; the figures of Cain and of Judas rise to the motions of the wizard's rod; the whole affair is prolonged to an extreme

length, and we do[illegible] the poet's purpose. The result, however, i[illegible]. Julian convinces himself that spirits o[illegible]rld have warned him to restore the old [illegible]m. At the moment of wildest cerebral e[illegible]mperor's messengers burst in upon him, with the news that Cæsar Gallos, his brother, has been murdered, that Julian is nominated Cæsar, and that the Emperor gives him his sister Helena in marriage.

He reappears in Gaul. After the celebrated victory at Argentoratum, he returns into Lutetia to Helena. A message from Constantius, accompanied by a present of fruit from Italy, reaches the camp at the same time. Helena, who has received him with every display of conjugal affection, eats some peaches which have been carefully poisoned, and rushes on to the scene raving. The passage which follows is as revolting as powerful. English views of propriety scarcely permit me to reproduce the peculiar tenor of the revelations she makes in her delirium. Suffice it to say that she proves her married life to have been a grossly unfaithful one, and that she names as the dearest of her lovers a Christian priest, who, by a not unparalleled fiction, has persuaded her to regard him as an impersonation of the Second Person of the Trinity, In an agony of shame and horror, Julian curses the Galilæan; this uttermost indignity was needed to give him the power of perfect hatred against Christianity. But for the moment there is no time for reflection. His victory has won him the jealousy of the Emperor, and, threatened with the fate of Gallos, he only saves his life by leaping out of the window into the throng of soldiers. His appeal to their gratitude turns the scale violently in his favour; he is elected

Emperor, and marches towards Constantinople. The central idea in this act is the moral force which the adultery of his Christian wife and the treachery of the Christian Emperor exert, in concert with circumstances, in driving Julian into active enmity against their faith.

The fifth act is occupied with the march through Italy. The body of Helena, by reason of her purity, forsooth! works miracles, to Julian's infinite disgust. On the other hand, he makes retreat impossible by publicly worshipping Helios, and marches victoriously eastward. So closes 'Julian's Apostasy,' having scarcely flagged anywhere in interest and power, and leaving a distinct heroic central figure on the mind.

But the second drama, 'Julian the Emperor,' from the very outset, is afflicted with a sense of flatness and deadness that the author in vain struggles to throw off. The moment we find Julian crowned at Constantinople he ceases to be an heroic figure at all. The vain effort to revive the Pagan cultus among the masses of the people, the trifling and annoying passages at Antioch, the intellectual meannesses of Julian, the terrible fiascos at Alexandria and Jerusalem, have nothing tragical in them. These long acts of Ibsen's drama are not without importance, but their interest is solely historical, or perhaps philosophical; they are utterly prosaic. The dramatist has been hampered by an overplus of historical and legendary material. No trifle is spared us, even that slight epigram against Apolinarius, Ἀνέγνων ἔγνων κατέγνων, is dragged in, losing all force in its Norse translation. We find litle to praise or blame in the first three acts of this long drama, but when the fatal Persian march commences, the soul of the

poet revives. [illegible] remembers its august abodes, and Julian's fi[illegible] something of heroic dignity. It is almost in[illegible] Ibsen has chosen to dwell on the dirty habit[illegible] has not spared us the traditional inky fingers, or the [illegible]min-haunted beard. High talk about Helios and the Phrygian Mother consorts but ill with such terrible details. But with the fourth act our interest revives; we forget the importance of the historical Julian in the lofty dreamer and great warrior, who rises to the height of the occasion in the great eastward expedition against Persia. The story is told finely and graphically; we see the baffled and dejected Emperor pushing on unflinchingly, stung by the songs of the Christians, gnawed at heart with the sense of his ill-success against their Master, yet through it all, determined, calm, and resolute. The condition of his mind is illustrated by a dialogue with the mystic Maximos, of which we translate a part:—

Maximos. The vine of the world is grown old, and yet you fancy to be able, as before, to offer raw grapes to those who thirst after new wine.

Julian. Ah! my Maximos, who thirsts? Name me one man, outside our intimate circle, who is led by a spiritual enthusiasm. Unfortunate that I am, to be born into such an iron age!

Maximos. Blame not the age. Had the age been greater, you had been less. The soul of the world is like a rich man who has countless sons. If he parts his riches equally to all the sons, all are well-to-do, but none rich. But if he leaves them all penniless but one, and leaves all to him, then that one stands rich in a circle of poor men.

Here we find expressed Julian's hope and his despair. Ever pressing like a weight upon his spirit, is the indifference with which the world receives his gift of the new

wine. It is the most deadly of his reverses; it is worse a thousand times than the army of King Sapores, worse even than the untiring zeal of his Christian adversaries. These his persecutions have roused into martyr-heroism and soldered together with brotherly love, but no passionate zeal burns in the dull hearts of the worshippers of Pan and Helios. Yet his one hope and consolation is that in himself all that is god-like centres, that when all foreign opposition is put down, the conscious divinity in himself will blaze out, to the discomfiture of the Galilæans, and, above all, to the spiritual awakening of the Polytheists. Then follows the burning of the ships, and even till the middle of the last act, Ibsen contrives to lose again the poet in the religious philosopher. But in describing the last night before the final battle, his genius suddenly takes fire, and he closes the poem in a white-light of imaginative sublimity. By a pool of dark water, in the midst of trees, Julian stands and consults with the faithful Maximos. He clings more vehemently than ever to the belief in his own divinity. He longs to die to become a god; it even flashes over his brain to slip into the dark pool, and take his place at once 'at home in the light of the sun and of all the stars.' He is haunted by the unendurable vision of the Crucified. Without terror, without remorse, but with maddening hatred and horror, he sees wherever he goes the great figure robed in white stretching its bleeding hands to stop him in his course. In the midst of this weird augury the Persian army bursts at midnight on the camp. In the darkness the armies meet and thunder together; Julian unarmed leaps on horseback, and plunges into the foremost fighting. Through the night his

unscathed figure is seen in the thickest of the battle, but just at daybreak he looks eastward, and there, where other men see only the crimson dawn shooting along the cold sky, Julian in an ecstasy of horror sees the colossal figure of Christ, robed in imperial purple, circled by singing women that string their bows with the light of his hair, storming down the awakened heavens to crush him into nothingness. He turns to plunge again into the battle, but his old foster-brother, Agathon, now becomes a furious fanatic, draws his bow, and wounds him deeply in the side. He falls, crying, 'Thou hast conquered, Galilæan!'

Now, to give briefly a notion of the causes that have militated against the positive success of this work. First and foremost, the technical imperfection of its style; it is written from first to last in prose. It is hardly credible that Ibsen, a poet who has distinguished himself above all recent writers by his skill in adapting lyrical and choral measures to dramatic themes, should have deliberately abandoned his instrument when he undertook this tragical study. It is as if Orpheus should travel hellwards without his ivory lyre. Every charm of harmony and plastic art was needed to draw the buried figure of Julian out of the shameful oblivion of the ages. I earnestly trust that no idle words of that garrulous criticism which is only too ready to commend the indiscretions of popular poets will induce him to appear again in so serious a part without his singing-robes. But more important than this is the failure to support the heroic dignity of the principal character. If Julian does not fill the scene, who can? Not Gregory, not Basil, who are mere lay-figures; not Maximos, who wanes and waxes with the waxing and

waning of his master. But perhaps the ultimate reason of failure is to be found in what lies out of the poet's reach—the inherent quality of the theme. Julian was not the voice of his time; he was an anachronism. In his brief life was exemplified how much can be done by one whole-hearted man in stopping the civilisation of a world, only to rush on with a fiercer current when he is taken out of the way. Julian attempted to restore what had been tried in the balances of history and found wanting; he had nothing new to suggest. The gods of Æschylus had dwindled down to the nymphs of Longus; the 'folding-Star of Bethlehem' had glared on them, and they had sickened and fled away. To resuscitate their ghosts was the dream of a morbid scholar, ignorant of the hearts of men, and blind to the deeper significance of all the signs of the times.

I have left myself no space to do more than mention the names of Ibsen's historical and national dramas. The first, 'Gildet paa Solhoug' ('The Banquet at Solhoug') appeared in 1856. This was followed in 1857 by 'Fru Inger til Österaad' ('Mistress Inger at Österaad'), a much finer poem, which Ibsen has lately revised and almost rewritten. It has been Ibsen's fortune in life to rise very slowly, like Dryden, into the full exercise of his powers. In each successive drama we find a more ample expression and greater audacity of thought than in the one before it. 'Hærmændene paa Helgeland' ('The Warriors at Helgeland') followed, in 1858, with a fresh series of scenes from old Norse history, given with wonderful vigour and precision. But Ibsen's masterpiece in this kind of writing is 'Kongs-Emnerne' ('The Pretenders'), which

appeared in 1864. It has for its theme the struggle for the vacant throne of Sverre, in the first half of the thirteenth century. 'This epoch, the most romantic in saga-history, has been a favourite with the northern poets from Öhlenschläger down to Björnson. In this case, the time is chosen which immediately followed the death of King Sverre. A troop of claimants clutched at the falling crown, but two stood out above the rest, and drew the eyes of all men upon them—Hakon Hakönssön and Skule Bårdssön. Between these the choice really lay; Hakon was putative son of Sverre, and Skule brother of an earlier king. Ibsen's drama begins with a scene in which all the heads of the nation, gathered in front of Bergen Cathedral, wait for the ordeal of hot iron to decide whether Hakon is truly Sverre's son or no. The ordeal declares in the affirmative, and Hakon, so assured by Heaven, gains perfect confidence in himself and in the justice of his cause, while Skule doubts and hesitates. Thus the key-note of the poet's estimate of each character is struck at once: Hakon's strength is his calm self-sufficiency, as Skule's weakness is his vacillating self-mistrust. Hakon becomes king, does everything to conciliate Skule, makes him duke, marries his daughter, but to no avail. In Skule there is ever the same fiery craving for equality with Hakon, for the name and right of king. But while Hakon possesses to an eminent degree the good fortune and august bearing of an old-world king, Skule, as his rival says, has all the superb gifts of intellect and 'courage, is made to stand nearest to the king, but never to be king himself.' Hakon's great new idea is to make Norway not a kingdom only, but a nation; to break down

provincial feuds, and make the people one and indivisible. How Skule plagiarises this idea, finds it gives him a power over men's hearts that no thought of his own ever gave him, how by its help he rises to brief kingship, through much blood, and falls at last before the innate power of will that makes Hakon king by every right, human and divine, can only be roughly indicated here. The main characters are drawn with great subtlety and finish, and are relieved by the delicate portrait of Queen Margaret, wife and daughter of the rivals, and by that of Bishop Nicolas, a crafty and witty priest, utterly selfish and unprincipled, but devoted to the interests of his Church. The dramatic power displayed in this poem quite raises it out of any mere local interest, and gives it a claim to be judged at a European tribunal.

THE LOFODEN ISLANDS.

Among the thousands who throng to the Continent for refreshment and adventure, how few leave the great southward-streaming mass, and seek the desolate grandeur of those countries which lie north of our own land! Of those who do diverge, the great majority are sportsmen, bent on pitiless raids against salmon and grouse. It is strange that the noblest coast scenery in Europe should be practically unknown to so ubiquitous a people as we are: but so it is: and as long as the thirst for summer climates remains in us, the world's winter-garden will be little visited. It is the old story: the Northmen yearn after the Nibelungen treasure in the South.

Doubtless, for us who are supposed to shiver in perennial fog, this tropical idolatry is right and wise. With all the passion of Rosicrucian philosophers, we worship the unfamiliar Sun-god, and transport ourselves to Italy or Egypt to find him. But what if he have a hyperborean shrine—a place of fleeting visit in the far North, where for a while he never forsakes the heavens, but in serene beauty gathers his cloud-robes hourly about him, and is lord of midnight as of mid-day? Shall we not seek him there, and be rewarded perchance by such manifestations of violet and scarlet and dim green, of scathing white

light, and deepest purple shadow, as his languorous votaries of the South knew nothing of?

With such persuasive hints, I would lead the reader to the subject of this chapter. I imagine to most minds the Lofoden Islands are associated with little except school-book legends of the Maelström, and perhaps the undesirable savour of cod-liver oil. With some they have a shadowy suggestion of iron-bound rocks, full of danger and horror, repulsive and sterile, and past the limit of civilisation. So little has been written about them, and that little is so inadequate, that I cannot wonder at the indifference to their existence which prevails. With the exception of a valuable paper by Mr. Bonney, that appeared some time back in the 'Alpine Journal,' I know of no contribution to geographical literature which treats of the group in any detail; and that paper, both from the narrow circulation of the periodical, and also from the limited district of which it treats, cannot have had that influence which its merit and the subject deserve.

The Lofoden Islands, which I visited in 1871, are an archipelago lying off the Arctic coast of Norway. Although in the same latitude as Central Greenland, Siberia, and Boothia Felix, they enjoy, in common with all the outer coast of Scandinavia, a comparatively mild climate; even in the severest winters their harbours are not frozen. The group extends at an acute angle to the mainland for about one hundred and forty miles, north-east and south-west. In shape they seem on the map like a great wedge thrust out into the Atlantic, the point being the desolate rock of Röst, the most southerly of the islands; but this wedge is not solid: the centre is occupied by a

sea-lake, which communicates by many channels with the ocean. As all the islands are mountainous, and of most fantastic forms, it can be imagined that this peculiar conformation leads to an endless panorama of singular and eccentric views. The largest of the Lofodens is Hindö, which forms the base of the wedge; north of this runs the long oval isle of Andö; to the west lies Langö, whose rugged coast has been torn and fretted by the ocean into the most intricate confusion of outline; the central lake has for its centre Ulvö—thus the heart of the whole group; and from the south of Hindö run in succession towards the south-west, Ost Vaagö, Vest Vaagö, Flakstadö, Moskenæsö, Værö, and little ultimate Röst. All these, and several minor satellites also, are inhabited by scattered families of fishermen. There is no town, scarcely a village; it is but a scanty population so barren and wild a land will support.

But quiet and noiseless as the shores are when the traveller sees them in their summer rest, they are busy enough, and full of animation, in the months of March and April. As soon as the tedious sunless winter has passed away, the peculiar Norwegian boats, standing high in the water, with prow and stern alike curved upwards, begin to crowd into the Lofoden harbours from all parts of the vast Scandinavian coast. It is the never-failing harvest of codfish that they seek. Year after year in the early spring, usually about February, the waters around these islands are darkened with innumerable multitudes of cod. They are unaccountably local in these visitations. I was assured they had never been known to extend farther south than Værö, at the extremity of the group.

The number of boats collected has been estimated at 3,000; and as each contains on an average five men, the population of the Lofodens in March must be very considerable. Unfortunately for these 'toilers of the sea,' the early spring is a season of stormy weather and tumultuous seas: when the wind is blowing from the north-west or from the south-west, they are especially exposed to danger; when in the former quarter the sudden gusts down the narrow channel are overwhelming, and when in the latter the waves are beaten against the violent current always rushing down the Vest Fjord from its narrow apex. The centre of the busy trade in fish is Henningsvær, a little collection of huts perched on the rocks under the precipitous flanks of Vaagekallen, the great mountain of Ost Vaagö. I was assured that in April, when the fish is all brought to shore, and the operations of gutting and cleaning begin, the scene on the shore becomes more strange than delightful. The disgusting labours which complete the great herring season in our own Hebrides are utterly outdone by the Norse cod-fishers. Men, women, and children cluster on the shore, busily engaged in their filthy work, and steeped to the eyes in blood and scales and entrails: at last the rocks themselves are slippery with the reeking refuse: one can scarcely walk among it; and such a smell arises as it would defy the rest of Europe to equal. The fish is then spread on the rocks to dry, and eventually piled in stacks along the shore: in this state it is known as klip-fish. Some is split and fastened by pegs to long rods, and allowed to flap in the wind till it dries to the consistence of leather: it is then called stock-fish. Before midsummer, flotillas of the swift boats called

jagter gather again to the Lofodens, and bear away for exportation to Spain and Italy the dried results of the spring labour. Bergen is the great emporium for this trade. The other industry of the islands is the extraction of 'cod-liver oil:' the livers of all kinds of fishes supply this medicine, those of sharks being peculiarly esteemed. Along the low rocks, and around the houses, we find great cauldrons in which these painfully odorous livers are being slowly stewed: a heavy steam arises and the oily smell spreads far and wide. But this is not a feature peculiar to the Lofodens: all over the coast of Finmark the shores reek with this flavour of cod-liver oil.

It is a matter of regret to me, in my functions of apologist for these islands, that truth obliges me to raze to the ground with ruthless hand the romantic fabric of fable that has surrounded one of them from time immemorial. The Maelström, the terrific whirlpool that

> Whirled to death the roaring whale,

that sucked the largest ships into its monstrous vortex, and thundered so loudly that, as Purchas tells us in his veracious 'Pilgrimage,' the rings on the doors of houses ten miles off shook at the sound of it—this wonder of the world must, alas! retire to that limbo where the myths of old credulity gather, in a motley and fantastic array. There is no such whirlpool as Pontoppidan and Purchas describe: the site of the fabulous Maelström is put by the former writer between Moskenæsö and the lofty isolated rock of Mosken. This passage is at the present day called Mosköström, and is one of those narrow straits, so common on the Norwegian coast, where the current of

water sets with such persistent force in one direction, that when the tide or an adverse wind meets it, a great agitation of the surface takes place. I have myself seen, on one of the narrow sounds, the tide meet the current with such violence as to raise a little hissing wall across the water, which gave out a loud noise. This was in the calmest of weather; and it is easy to believe that such a phenomenon occurring during a storm, or when the sea was violently disturbed, would cause small boats passing over the spot to be in great peril, and might even suddenly swamp them. Some such disaster, observed from the shore, and exaggerated by the terror of the beholder, doubtless gave rise to the prodigious legends of the Maelström. Such a catastrophe took place, I was informed, not long since, on the Salten Fjord, where there is an eddy more deserving the name of whirlpool than any in the Lofodens.

The legendary importance of the Maelström, as a kind of wonder of the world, led to the frequent mention of the Lofodens by the versifiers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But a specially interesting example of this kind connects with our islands the name of a most extraordinary personage, Bishop Anders Arrebo, the father of modern Scandinavian poetry. This great genius, whose sensuous and fiery nature contended in vain against the social laws of his time, and whose verse remains as a monument of broken hopes and wasted powers, was born at Ærøskjöbing, in Denmark, in 1587, the year that Shakspeare came up to London. In 1618 his brilliant parts had already been rewarded by the bishopric of Throndhjem, in Norway, from which he was ejected in 1622, for too much love of songs and stringed instruments, for

amorous discourse, and for too copious joviality at weddings and junketings. The offence seems to have been venial, the disgrace was ruinous; and Arrebo returned from his brief stay in Norway a broken and dejected man. He died in 1637, leaving his *magnum opus*, his didactic epic of the 'Hexæmeron,' still unprinted. It saw the light in 1661. Arrebo was a student and disciple of Ronsard and Du Bartas, and his writings partake of the universal affectation that stains the European poetry of his time, but they share also the love of physical beauty and the joyous naturalism of that rich age of fecundity and liberty. It was during his unlucky stay in Norway, that he is believed to have composed the 'Hexæmeron,' which contains many passages describing Norwegian scenery. That which deals with the Maelström may be worth citing:—

In Loufod far to north on Norway's distant shore,
A flood is found that hath no like the wide world o'er,
Entitled Moske-flood, from that high Mosker rock
Round which in seemly rings the obsequious waters flock;
When this with hasty zeal performs the moon's designs,
If any man comes near, the world he straight resigns;
In spring its billows rear like other mountains high,
But through their sides we see the sun, the earth's bright eye;
Then, if the wind should rise against the flood's wild way,
Two heroes rush and meet in crash of war's array.
Then tremble land and house, then doors and windows rattle,
The earth is fain to cleave before that monstrous battle;
The vast and magic whale dares not its breach essay,
But turns in fear to flight, and roaring speeds away.[1]

After more description in the same grandiose style, Arrebo proceeds to propound a theory of his own, which was universally received for at least a century, and which

[1] Appendix R.

made the poet more famous than the best of his verses. It runs thus :—

> Now my belief is this: that underneath the sea
> A belt of lofty rocks is forged immutably,
> Which hath an entrance, but is solid stone elsewhere,
> And in the centre sends a peak high up to air.
> When now the flood is come, with angry voice it calls,
> And rushes inward like a thousand waterfalls,
> And can no exit find to rule its rugged shock,
> So madly whirls around the lofty central rock,
> And rumbles like a quern when man doth grind therein.[1]

Ten years after the death of Arrebo there was born at North Herö, on the Arctic coast of Norway, a man who was destined to give considerable literary prominence to the Lofodens. This was Petter Dass, son of a certain Peter Dundas, a Scotchman of Dundee, who came over to Norway in 1635. This man, who was an influential ecclesiastic in the province of Nordland, composed, between 1678 and 1692, a long itinerary in verse, somewhat in the fashion of Drayton's 'Polyolbion,' entitled 'Nordlands Trompet' ('The Trumpet of Nordland'). This poem—if poem it can be called—has enjoyed since the lifetime of its author an uninterrupted popularity, which it owes rather to its lucid and sensible style, its humour and its nimble versification, than to fancy or imagination—of which it is devoid. A long canto in it is devoted to the Lofodens, much of which unfortunately is taken up with describing, with far less beauty of language than Arrebo had employed, the Maelström. We learn, however, that in Dass's time the principal Lofoden village stood on Skraaven, a small island now almost desolate. From Petter Dass's language, it seems to me almost certain that he visited the Lofodens,

[1] Appendix S.

and lodged at Skraaven, and also at a fishing station on Vaagö, of which he gives a minute and curious description.

Until lately, the topography of the islands was in a very unsettled state. The name of the group begins to appear on maps of North Europe about the year 1600; but for a century and a half there is no sign to show that geographers were at all aware of the real position of the islands. In Pontoppidan's map the right point on the coast is at last fixed, but the oval smooth pieces of land, at a great distance from one another, which adorn the coast of Finmark on his chart, are a sadly inaccurate realisation of these firmly-compacted and fantastically-shaped Lofodens. Only within the last few years has the patient survey of the Norwegian Admiralty presented us with a minute and exact chart of the coast, and the sea-line may now be considered as accurately laid down. But with the interior of the islands it is not so: they consist of inaccessible crags, dreary morasses, and impenetrable snow-fields. The Lofoden islander prizes the sea-shore, for it feeds and enriches him; and the fringe of rich pasture which smiles along it, for it preserves his cattle; but the land which lies behind these is an unknown wilderness to him: if he penetrates it, it is to destroy the insolent eagles that snap up stray lambs, or to seek some idle kid that has strayed beyond the flock. Hence it is very difficult to find names for the peaks that bristle on the horizon or tower above the valleys; in many cases they have no names, in many more these names have found their way into no printed maps. It was an object with me to fix on the true appellations of these magnifi-

cent mountains; and I was in many cases enabled, through the courtesy of the people and through patient collation of reports, to increase the amount of information in this respect. It must be remembered that many of the names given were taken down from oral statement, and that the spelling must in some cases be phonetic.

The only key to this enchanted palace of the Oceanides is, for ordinary travellers, the weekly steamer from Trondhjem. This invaluable vessel brings the voyager, after a somewhat weary journey through an endless multitude of low, slippery, gray islets and tame hills, to the Arctic Circle. Another day through scenery which at that point becomes highly eccentric and interesting, and in some places, grand, brings him to Bodö. This depressing village is London and Liverpool in one for the inhabitants of our islands: every luxury, from a watch to a piano, from a box of Huntley and Palmer's biscuits to a pig, must be brought from Bodö. After a long stoppage here, the steamer passes on up the coast some twenty miles, to a strange place called Grytö, a labyrinth of slimy rocks just high enough to hide the horizon. From this the boat emerges through a tortuous and perilous sound, and is at once in the great Vest Fjord. Forty miles ahead in one unbroken line rise the sharp mountains of the Lofodens, and without swerving a point, the good ship glides west-north-west into the very centre of the great wall. If the traveller visit the islands in summer, and make the passage across the Vest Fjord at midnight, as he is almost sure to do, the scene, provided the air be clear and dry, will be gorgeous. In the weird Arctic midnight, with a calm sea shimmering before the bows, and all things clothed in

that cold yellow lustre, deepening to amber and gold behind the great blue mountains, which is so strange a characteristic of the sun at midnight, the scene is wonderfully impressive. As the steamer glides on, making for Balstad on the south-west corner of Vest Vaagö, Flakstadö and Moskenæsö lie somewhat to our left; and perchance, if the eye is very keen, far away in the same direction it may detect the little solitary rock of Væro, and still farther Röst itself, our *ultima Thule*. The southern range of the Lofodens has been compared to a vertebrated skeleton, and the simile is vastly well chosen; for the isles taper off to a minute tail, and the channels that run between them are so narrow and fit the outline so exactly, that they appear like joints. Seen from the Vest Fjord, the whole looks like one vast land, undivided. Higher and higher on the primrose-coloured sky the dark peaks rise as we approach our haven. And now the hills of Moskenæsö assume definite shape; the two central points rising side by side are Guldtind and Reinebring, the former being the southern one. For an account, the only one I know, of Moskenæsö I can refer the reader to the 'Reise durch Norwegen' of Herr C. F. Lessing, published in 1831, at Berlin; a scarce book, I believe. Herr Lessing was an enterprising naturalist, who visited Værö, Moskenæsö, and Vest Vaagö, and wrote an entertaining chapter about them in his excellent little book. The mountains of Moskenæsö are not very lofty, but the island is inaccessible, the shores being so steep and the outline so indented by the sea, that it is necessary to take a boat from haven to haven: one cannot pass by land. The highest mountain of Flakstadö, the precipitous

Napstind, is on the northern extremity of that island, and hidden from us by the projecting promontories of Vaagö; but the lofty hills very slightly to our left belong to this island. Even while we speak, we glide between half-submerged rocks and rounded islets crowded with sea-birds into the bay of Balstad, and the Lofodens are around us! The hour is that one of glamour in these Arctic summers when the day is but a few hours old, and the golden sheen of midnight has given way to the strong chiaroscuro of sunrise. Above our heads rises the mountain Skottind, and we perceive how strange is the land we have arrived in; no longer the rounded hills of the mainland, no more any conventional mountain forms and shapes in any wise familiar. Skottind soars into the clouds one vast cliff of dark rock split across now and then with a sharp crevasse, above which rises another wall of cliff, and so on to the summit, where thin spires and sharp pinnacles, clear-cut against the sky, complete the mighty peak. This is characteristic of all the mountains of this southern and grandest range: especially unique and perplexing is the thin look of the extreme summit; apparently the ridge is as sharp and narrow as a notched razor; no signs of the receding of the edge are to be seen. All these points are inaccessible on one side; from the interior it might be possible to reach the top of some of them, and sublime would be the view so gained. At present, this chilly July morning, Skottind rises a wall of darkest indigo blue between the sun and our faces; about its horns the heavy tissue of clouds is smitten and shot through with brilliant white light of sunrise, and the fainter wreaths of vapour, delicately tinged with rose-colour and orange, pause before they rise and flee

away over the awakened heavens. As for Balstad itself, it is a cluster of wooden houses painted gray and green, and some deeply stained with red ochre, scattered about on a frightfully rugged platform of rocks, so uneven that I cannot think a square yard of earth or tolerably flat rock could be found anywhere. Some of the houses are built on the outlying islets, treacherous low reefs on which the gray sea creeps and shows his ominous white teeth Such places seem to promise certain destruction in the first storm, but the cottages survive, and the bay certainly is very sheltered.

Leaving Balstad, the steamer coasts along the shores of Vest Vaagö. The twin peaks that appeared from the middle of Vest Fjord as the highest land in this island lie on the northern coast, and are now far out of sight; they are known under the collective name of Himmelstinder —a poetic and suggestive title. It may be well to point out that 'tind' is equivalent to needle, spitz, and is descriptive of the pinnacle-character of the mountain. Himmelstind was ascended by Herr Lessing, who crossed over to it from Buxnæs, and bravely ascended, in spite of pouring rain and the derisive remarks of the natives: his account of the adventure is highly humorous. We pursue our voyage through an infinite multitude of sterile rocks and under fine stormy crags till we reach the mouth of the broad Gimsöström, the gulf that divides us from Ost Vaagö. Here the colossal precipices of Vaagekallen come into sight, the sublimest, though not the loftiest, of all the Lofoden mountains. This stupendous mass occupies the south-west extremity of Ost Vaagö, and is almost always shrouded in cloud; the snow lies in patches about its ravines,

but most of its summit is too sheer for snow to rest on or any herb to grow. Vaagekallen is the beacon towards which the fisher, laden with finny spoils, wearily steers at fall of day; for under its spurs, on a group of islets in the sound, is built the village of Henningsvær, the most important of all fishing stations, and a flourishing little place. It has a lighthouse also, the largest on this coast. A little farther on we pass the quaint church of Vaagen—Kirkevaag, as the inhabitants call it—built, like all Northern churches, of wood, and painted dark brown. Here we find the only trace of historic importance that Lofoden can boast, I believe; for it was from Kirkevaag that that enthusiast Hans Egede, led by devoted love for the souls of men, went in 1721 to preach the gospel to the desolate savages of Greenland. We pass on through crowds of eider-ducks and terns and cormorants to Svolvær, a prominent station on Ost Vaagö. The entrance to this harbour is through a maze of black, cruel rocks, round which the sea tumbles and glides ominously; at last, after an intricate half-hour of steering, through passages where no path seemed possible, a large village is reached, built like a lacustrine town on piles above the water. Svolvær is thrown about on a heap of islets and promontories, here a house, and there a house, on a site even wilder than that of Balstad. The mountain rising sheer behind it is the Svolvær Fjeld. Tolerable accommodation may be got at this place, though the house of entertainment is, according to Mr. Bonney, very inconveniently situated. It had been decided by a commission, shortly before I arrived, that if ever it should be thought desirable to found a town on the Lofodens, this should be the site of it. Leaving Svolvær,

the Östnæs Fjord, gloomy, narrow, and terrible as that gate which Dante saw in Hell, looms on our left; enormous mountains hem it in. On the west side, eminent above the rest, is a peak called, I believe, the Jomfrutind; it would be a dismal thing to have to live on the shores of this sombre and sinister water-glen.

But now, straight before us, we perceive three islands, not belonging to the general range, but standing at right angles to it, running far out in the Vest Fjord; and between them, we see glimpses of the mainland, now not very distant. These islands are circular, and not indented by the sea; but a shelf of rock, covered with rough pasturage, runs round each of them, and then a mountain soars suddenly into the skies. Stor Molla, one of the largest and nearest to Ost Vaagö, is a double peak of quite exceptional grandeur; and Lille Molla and Skraaven, though less lofty, are scarcely tamer in their forms. It is difficult to form a due conception of this peculiar masculine scenery; there is nothing pretty or charming about it, but it is extremely impressive. Compared with the rest of Norwegian sea-scenery, with that south of the Arctic Circle especially, it differs from it as an American backwoodsman differs from a London counter-jumper. I would here protest a little, in wonder, at the compliments paid to the coast scenery of South and Central Norway: saving that terrible sound which runs between Bremangerland and the main, under the awful cliffs of Hornelen, there is no ocean landscape from Torghatten to the Naze to call forth the slightest enthusiasm. There is much finer country in the Hebrides. To return to Lille Molla. This island and its congeners are all inhabited, and not two hours' sail from

Svolvær; on Stor Molla accommodation of some sort might probably be found, and I think this little group would be well worth investigation. They have just that amount of geographical independence which often suffices to produce a difference in flora and fauna. Between the two Mollas we steam, noticing the rough sæters on the shores, the rows of stockfish flapping in the wind, and the cauldrons of stewing livers, faintly odorous from the steamer's deck. The Ökellesund (for so the northern passage between Stor Molla and Vaagö appears to be called) is too narrow to admit the steamer, but turning north as we leave the Möldoren, we enter the celebrated Raftsund.

The Raftsund, which has won the hearty admiration of every traveller who has seen it, is a narrow channel, fifteen miles long, running north-east between Vaagö and Hindö. It is of various width, narrowest towards the north; on each side mountains of the most vigorous and eccentric forms rise in precipices and lose themselves in pinnacles and sharp edges that cut the clouds. As this is the one part of the Lofodens that has been somewhat minutely described, I need not linger in painting it. A few of the peaks, however, I can name. All the loftiest and boldest are on the Vaagö side. Perhaps the strangest is Iistind, a gigantic mass. with a tower-like cairn on the summit; Mahomet's Tomb we nicknamed it, till a native obligingly gave its true title. This is at the middle of the sound, where an island breaks the current, and several small fjords push into the land. Another very noble cluster of aiguilles is Ruttind, on Vaagö, but much to the south of Iistind. These peaks are mostly wreathed with foamy cloud, that on a fine day daintily rises and lays bare their dark beauty,

and as airily closes round them again. About the summits the rifts and joints are full of snow all the summer, and from every bed, leaping over rocks and sliding down the smooth slabs of granite, a narrow line of water, white as the parent snow, falls in a long cataract to the sea. On the Hindö side, Kongstind, which lies north-east of Iistind, is the most striking mass. On both sides near the water the ground is covered with deep grass, of a bright green colour, and flowers bloom in beautiful abundance. In one place the harebells were so thick on the hill-side that they gleamed, an azure patch, half a mile away. Flocks of sheep and goats luxuriate in this lush herbage; here and there ferns are in the ascendancy, *Polypodium phlegopteris* and *dryopteris* being everywhere abundant.

Leaving the Raftsund, we suddenly enter that sea-lake which, as I have said, holds the centre of the archipelago. We are now at the heart of the weird land, and the sight before us is one of the loveliest that can be conceived. The bristling character of the southern coast gives place to a calmer, more placid scenery. Here there are no subtle rocks, no frightful reefs; all is simple, serene, and stately. I cannot do better than give my remembrance of the first time I saw this scene, on a calm sunlit morning in July. Leaving the Raftsund, we bore due north. As we steamed through quiet, shimmering water gently down on Ulvö, the ghostly mountains lay behind us, a semicircle of purple shadow; down their sides the clear snow-patches, muffling the vast crevasses, shone, dead-white, or stretched in glaciers almost to the water's edge. In sweet contrast to their grandeur, the sunny slopes of Ulvö rose before us, with the little kirk of Hassel nestling in a bright

green valley; in its heart one violet peak rose, hiding its dim head in the mystery of the vaporous air above. The sea had all the silence and the restfulness of dreamland: not a ripple broke the sheeny floor, save where a flock of ducklings followed in a fluttering arc the mother-bird, or where the cormorant hurled himself on some quivering fish. We drifted round the eastern promontory of the lovely isle; peak by peak the pleasant hills of Langö gathered on our right, while to the left of us, and ever growing dimmer in the distance, the prodigious aiguilles of Vaagö, in their clear majestic colour, soared unapproachable above the lower foreground of Ulvö. Behind us now was Hindö, less grand perhaps than Vaagö, but displaying two central mountains of immense height, Fisketind and Mosadlen, the latter reported to attain a greater elevation than any in the group.

Langö lies very close on the right when we enter the Borösund and make for Stokmarknæs. Borö itself lies in the strait between Ulvö and Langö. The pretty hamlet on its shores was the centre of the investigations of Dr. George Berna and his friends, as related by Herr Carl Vogt in his interesting 'Nordfahrt.' On the northern shore of Ulvö, at the mouth of a small valley, lies the large village of Stokmarknæs. It is almost a town, containing perhaps one hundred and twenty houses; it may be the most populous place in the Lofodens, though I am told that the discovery of coal in Andö has greatly increased the village-port of Dvergberg in that island. Stokmarknæs looks very pretty from the sea, with its clean painted houses of deal wood, and bright tiled roofs. Ulvö is the richest, most fertile, and most populous of the islands. It stands in the sea

like a hat, having a central mountain mass, and a broad rim of very flat and fertile land. To compare great things with mean, it is in shape extremely like that unpleasant island, Lunga, in the Hebrides, facetiously known as the Dutchman's Hat. Ulvö culminates in a single peak, by name Sæterheid, which rises close behind Stokmarknæs. This mountain, whose sides are principally covered by a thick jungle of birch underwood, slopes gradually away into a rocky ridge running across the island, and falls in steep precipitous cliffs to the flat lands that form the external rim. These flats were originally, I suppose, morasses, but have been in great part reclaimed, though on the eastern side of Sæterheid there are still great bogs, and two little tarns, full of trout. At Stokmarknæs (which is quite a place of importance, and had in the summer of 1871 a bazaar for the sick and wounded French) good accommodation can be had; Herr Halls, the landhandler, being in a condition to make visitors very comfortable at a moderate charge, and this is a good station to leave the steamer at. Herr Halls also supplies karjols, and a very pleasant excursion can be made on one of those arm-chairs-on-wheels to the south of the island. There is one road in Ulvö, running from Stokmarknæs round the eastern coast to Melbo, a gaard or farmstead opposite Vaagö. It is a very good road, more like a carriage-drive through a gentleman's park than a public thoroughfare. It is about ten miles from Stokmarknæs to Melbo. The road passes Hassel Church, at the eastern extremity of the island, an odd octagonal building of wood, painted red, with a high conical roof. Norwegian churches have an excessively undignified look; some are like pigeon-houses, some like pocket-telescopes.

Hassel reminded me irresistibly of a mustard-pot. Yet it is a structure of high ecclesiastical dignity, for not only all Ulvö, but parts of Langö and Hindö, and the whole north of Vaagö, depend upon it for pastoral care. It is a very pretty sight on a summer Sunday morning to see the boats gathering from all parts to it, full of the simple, devout people in their holiday dress.

To judge by the number of red-shank and curlew that wheel above the traveller, or flutter wailing before him, the bogs beside the road must teem with wild-fowl. The north side of the island is thickly dotted with farms and fishermen's huts, but after leaving Hassel and the adjoining hamlet of Steilo these diminish in number, till at Melbo the road itself disappears, and the flat land becomes a wild peat bog, with only a few huts near the sea. Melbo is simply a large farm, owned by Fru Coldevin, a lady who opens her house in the summer for the accommodation of sportsmen and those few travellers that wander to this far end of the earth. A cluster of islets off the coast here is a part of her property. She preserves these rocks for the sea-birds, which flock to them in extraordinary numbers. Little kennels of turf and stone are built to shelter the nests, and here the eider ducks strip themselves of their exquisite down for the sake of their offspring, and in due time see it appropriated by Fru Coldevin.

The lovely range of snowy points in Vaagö is seen on a fine day bewitchingly from Melbo. Mr. Bonney who unhappily seems to have had execrable weather in the Lofodens, sighed pathetically at these peaks from Melbo. He gives Alpine names to the two highest, supposing apparently that they were nameless in the native tongue;

they are not so neglected, however. The foremost mountain, which from Ulvo seems the highest, is Higraven, 'the tomb or monument of the wild beast;' and the other, really the loftiest peak in Vaago, is Blaamanden. My friend Mr. W. S. Green accomplished in 1871 the ascent of Higraven, and kindly permits me to transcribe from his journal the story of his adventure. Mr. Green's familiarity with Swiss Alpine scenery would tend to make him a severe critic of mountain effects, and that he can write thus enthusiastically of the Lofodens is no small proof of their wonderful beauty.

Mr. Green started from Melbo on a fine July morning, at 10 A.M; the clouds, *taage*, masses of opaque white fleece on the sides of all the peaks, promised ill for the expedition; but soon these rolled away, and left the snowy rocks clear-cut against an azure sun-lit sky. 'The face of the sea was as smooth as glass, and over it rose the long line of snow-capped peaks, softening from rugged purple crags to emerald-green slopes as they approached the sea, looking about a mile off, though in fact the nearest of them was seven. I had determined beforehand which peak I should climb: it seemed to be the highest in Ost Vaagö and lay at the head of the Stover Fjord. My boatmen were pleasant fellows, and as I lay luxuriously in the stern, steering, I conversed with them in bad Norse; my questions had reference principally to the sea-birds. A pretty little sort of guillemot with red legs they call *testhe*; this bird is very common: another common bird, the hen-eider I think, is called *ae*. We passed many of these with a train of young ones after them. As the boat skimmed along we passed many beautiful jelly-fish:

one sort of *bolina* about the size of a goose-egg was particularly common. At last, after winding through many islets, we enter the Stover Fjord: the only thing I can compare it to is the Bay of Uri, which I think it surpasses in beauty, and the Aiguille de Dru is rivalled by these snow-seamed pinnacles. But it was 12 o'clock, and I jumped ashore at a sort of elbow where the fjord forks. I put some provisions into my pocket; then, with my sketching materials slung upon my back and my alpen-stock in my hand, I commenced the ascent. I first scrambled over boulders covered with fern, bushes, and wild flowers; these soon became very steep, and slinging myself up hand over hand through the bushes was very warm work. I took off my coat and hung it in the strap on my back; after a sharp climb over steep rocks I got on to a slope of snow that filled the gorge. In about an hour and a half I reached a col that I had aimed at all through. I could see the boat, a speck below, so I jodeled at the top of my voice, and soon heard a faint answer. The place I had come up was very steep, and the thought of descending it again not very pleasant. I took the precaution, however, of fixing bits of white paper on the rocks and bushes where I had met with difficulty, to serve as guides in my descent. There was a glorious view from where I stood, and the day was perfection. After another hour of steep climbing I reached a cornice of snow, but was able to turn off to the right and cross a level plateau of snow, from the other side of which rose up my peak. I now encountered very steep snow-slopes and rocks, and just before the snow rounded off into the dom, forming a summit, it became so hard that my feet could

get no hold. I had to resort to step-cutting: about a dozen steps sufficed to land me on the dom; an easy incline then led to the summit, on which I stood at 4.30 P.M. I wished for an aneroid; but from the time I took to ascend, and from other circumstances, I should think the height to be over 4,000, and possibly 5,000 feet. Now for the view. I have yet to see the Alpine view that surpasses this in its extreme beauty: the mountain chain of the mainland was in sight for, I suppose, a hundred miles; then came the Vest Fjord, studded with islands. The mountains around me were of the wildest and most fantastic form, not drawn out in a long chain, but grouped together, and embosoming lovely little tarns and lakes. The inner arm of the Stover Fjord, over which I seemed to hang, was of a deep dark blue, except where it became shallow, where it was of a bright pea-green. This latter colour may be accounted for by the fact that the rocks below low-water mark are white, with pure white nullipore and *balani*; there is no *laminaria* or sea-weed of any sort in these narrow fjords, except *Fucus vesiculosus*, and this grows only between tide-marks. Looking away to the north came Ulvö, with its fringe of islets; then Langö, with its sea of peaks: these do not appear, however, to be so high or rugged as the peaks of Hindö, that come next to the sight. Here Mosadlen stands up with his lovely crest of snow; far away, in an opposite direction, lies Vest Vaagö, where I remarked another peak that seemed to be of a respectable height. The view was perfection: one drop of bitterness was in my cup, and that was that a neighbouring peak was evidently higher than the one I had climbed. It was connected with my peak

by a very sharp rock *arrête* just below which was a flattish plateau of crevassed *névé*: it was too far to think of trying it, and it looked very difficult; an attempt upon it would be more likely to succeed if made from the south-east. Having made a sketch and built a cairn of stones, I looked about for the easiest way to descend, and found that a long slope of snow led into a valley connected with the north arm of the fjord; this I determined to try. I climbed down the steps I had cut, with my face to the snow; then sitting down and steering with my alpen-stock, I made the finest glissade I ever enjoyed. As I neared the bottom it was necessary to go lightly, as a torrent was roaring along under the snow. I soon had to take to the moraine, which was of a most trying character. I now got down to a charming little lake, in which islands of snow floated, and in which the peaks were mirrored to their summits. Skirting along this, and descending by the edge of a stream that led out of it, I came to another lovely tarn, on which were a couple of water-fowl. From this I clambered down through bushes at the side of a waterfall, and arrived on the strand of the fjord all safe. At 6.30 P.M. I was sitting in the boat, and in two hours arrived in Melbo.'

The superior peak that dashed Mr. Green's happiness was Blaamanden, which must now be considered the highest point out of Hindö. Vaagekallen is certainly lower even than Higraven.

Of the northern islands of the Lofoden group space fails me to speak much; they are but little known. Langö was skirted by the German expedition whose story is 'erzählt von Carl Vogt,' but his notes on this part of the tour are

unfortunately very scanty. The northern peninsula would seem to be the finest part of Langö. I hear of a splendid mountain, Klotind, which fills this tongue of land with its spurs. Andö, the most northerly of the archipelago, is the tamest of all: the interior of it has been surveyed with such minute care, that it is impossible to suppose its mountains can be very rugged. For the sake of anyone desirous of visiting Andö, I may remark that a little steamer has been started in connection with the large boat which meets the latter at Harstadhavn in Hindö, skirts the north of that island, calls at Dvergberg and Andenæs in Andö, and after a visit to the north of Senjen, returns the same way to Harstad. The same steamer calls off the coast of Grytö, a mountainous Lofoden, whose vast central peak of Fussen is seen in the distance from the Vaags Fjord.

In ordinary years the snow disappears from the low ground in these islands before May, and the rapid summer brings their scanty harvest soon to perfection. A few years ago, however, the snow lay on the cultivated lands till June, and a famine ensued. These poor people live a precarious life, exposed to the attacks of a singularly peevish climate. A whim of the cod-fish, a hurricane in the April sky, or a cold spring, is sufficient to plunge them into distress and poverty. Yet for all this they are an honest and well-to-do population; for, being thrifty and laborious, they guard with much foresight against the severities of nature. In winter the aurora scintillates over their solemn mountains, and illuminates the snows and wan gray sea; they sit at their cottage-doors and spin by the gleam of it; in summer the sun never sets, and they have the advantage of endless light to husband

their hardly-won crops. Remote as they are, too, they can all read and write: it is strange to find how much intelligent interest they take in the struggles of great peoples who never heard of Lofoden. It is a fact, too, not overflattering to our boasted civilisation, that the education of children in the hamlets of this remote cluster of islands in the Polar Sea is higher than that of towns within a small distance of our capital-city; ay, higher even, proportionally, than that of London itself.

I would fain linger over the delicious memories that the name of these wild islands brings with it; would fain take the reader to the pine-covered slopes of Sandtorv, the brilliant meadow of little Kjöen, so refreshing in this savage land; to the Tjeldæsund, as I saw it on a certain midnight, when the lustrous sun-light lay in irregular golden bars across the blue spectral mountains, and tinged the snow peaks daintily with rose-red. But space is wanting; and being forced to choose, I will wind up with a faint description of the last sight I had of the islands, on a calm sunny night in summer.

All day we had been winding among the tortuous tributaries of the Ofoten Fjord, and as evening drew on slipped down to Tranö, a station on the mainland side of the Vest Fjord, near the head of that gulf. It had been a cloudless day of excessive heat, and the comparative coolness of night was refreshing; the light, too, ceased to be garish, but flooded all the air with mellow lustre. From Tranö we saw the Lofodens rising all along the northern sky, a gigantic wall of irregular jagged peaks, pale blue on an horizon of gold fire. The surface of the fjord was slightly broken into little tossing waves, that, murmuring

faintly, were the only audible things that broke the sweet silence; the edge of the ripple shone with the colour of burnished bronze, relieved by the cool neutral gray of the sea-hollows. From Tranö we slipped across the fjord almost due west to the mouth of the Raftsund. The sun lay like a great harvest-moon, shedding its cold yellow light down on us from over Hindö, till, as we glided gradually more under the shadow of the islands, he disappeared behind the mountains: at 11.30 P.M. we lost him thus, but a long while after a ravine in Hindö of more than common depth again revealed him, and a portion of his disk shone for a minute like a luminous point or burning star on the side of a peak. About midnight we came abreast of Aarstenen, and before us rose the double peak of Lille Molla, of a black-blue colour, very solemn and grand; Skraaven was behind, and both were swathed lightly in wreaths and fox-tails of rose-tinged mist. There was no lustre on the waters here; the entrance to the sound was unbroken by any wave or ripple, unillumined by any light of sunset or sunrise, but a sombre reflex of the unstained blue heaven above. As we glided, in the same strange utter noiselessness of the hour when evening and morning meet, up the Raftsund itself, inclosed by the vast slopes of Hindö and the keen aiguilles of Vaagö, the glory and beauty of the scene rose to a pitch so high that the spirit was oppressed and overawed by it, and the eyes could scarcely fulfil their function. Ahead of the vessel the narrow vista of glassy water was a blaze of purple and golden colour, arranged in a faultless harmony of tone that was like music or lyrical verse in its direct appeal to the emotions. At each side the fjord reflected each elbow, each

edge, each cataract, and even the flowers and herbs of the base, with a precision so absolute that it was hard to tell where mountain ended and sea began. The centre of the sound, where it spreads into several small arms, was the climax of loveliness; for here the harmonious vista was broadened and deepened, and here rose Iistind towering into the unclouded heavens, and showing by the rays of golden splendour that lit up its topmost snows, that it could see the sun, whose magical fingers, working unseen of us, had woven for the world this tissue of variegated beauty.

RUNEBERG.

At the opening of the present century the monarchy of Sweden lay defenceless and almost moribund, supported in European opinion solely by the memory of its vast prestige. The dynasty of Wasa, which had held the crown for nearly two centuries, and from the hands of whose successive kings Sweden had received such matchless glory and such a world of sorrows, was approaching its last degeneracy in the person of Gustavus IV., a prim and melancholy bigot, touched with madness, and retaining of the iron will and clear intelligence of his ancestors nothing but a silly obstinacy and the ingenuity of a wizard maker of prophetic almanacks. The old order was passing away, throughout Europe, and the new had scarcely taken fixed form or entity. Geographically, Sweden had been dwindling throughout the eighteenth century, drying up, as it were, along the south shores of the Baltic: Courland was lost, Esthonia lost, even Pomerania was assailed. Finland, the most precious, the most extensive outland province, forming more than a fourth of the entire dominion, remained untouched, or almost untouched. There had not been wanting signs of Russian ambition working on the vast open frontier by Lake Ladoga. Already, before the century was half out, the great new power of Eastern Europe had determined that its capital would never be secure until the Russian supremacy was acknowledged everywhere east of the Gulf of

Bothnia. The Empress Elizabeth, while seizing the eastern counties of the province, had dangled before Finland the tempting hope of national independence under a protectorate of Russia. In 1788 the malcontent nobles, met at Anjala, offered to another great woman, to the Empress Catherine II., the dictatorship of Finland; but their treason infuriated the middle and lower classes, and when the Russian army commenced its invasion in 1789, it was met by a resistance as determined as it was unexpected. It was in this campaign that modern Finland first expressed itself; the war culminated in the battle of Porrasalmi, a glorious victory for the Finns, in which Adlercreutz and Döbeln, afterwards so famous as generals, won their spurs. The peace of Wärälä, in 1790, left Finland full of the enthusiasm of military success, and loyal as a dependency of Sweden. But the murder of Gustavus III., at the Opera House of Stockholm, in 1792, brought the luckless Gustavus IV. to the throne, and reduced the nation to despair. One of the first events of the new reign was the loss of Pomerania. Finland now became the most precious, as it was the last, jewel in the Swedish crown; and to comfort his excellent Finnish subjects, and to strengthen their hearts in the fear of 'Punaparte,' as the Finns called Napoleon, the dreary monarch made a solemn tour through the province in 1802. Thus security reigned for a little while on both sides of the Gulf of Bothnia, Europe in the meantime writhing, convulsed by a conjunction of wars that threatened to conclude in chaos.

At this eventful moment the greatest poet that has ever used the Swedish tongue saw the light in a seaport of Finland. Johan Ludvig Runeberg was born

February 5, 1804, at Jakobsstad, a little town half-way up the Gulf of Bothnia. He was the son of a merchant captain, and the eldest of six children. The straitened means of the parents induced them to accept the offer of the father's brother, a very well-to-do man in Uleåborg, who offered to adopt Johan Ludvig. Thither, therefore, far away north, to the extreme town of the country, the child went. In Uleåborg he must have seen the birth-place of the greatest then-living poet of Finland, Franzèn, in whose steps he was afterwards to tread. We know little of his boyhood, except that at due age he was sent to the college at Wasa, and that he was so poor that he could only continue his studies there by serving as tutor to the younger and richer boys. But in the meantime changes of vast importance had occurred in the constitution of his country, changes to which he was destined in after life to give immortality by his art. In 1807, Napoleon had met Alexander I. at Tilsit, and had offered Finland to the Russian monarch in exchange for help against England. By one of those coincidences which give history the air of a well-planned sensational drama, the autocrat who now lies under a mass of Finnish porphyry in his Parisian tomb set out on the last great perilous enterprise which led him to his doom by the sacrifice of Finland to Russian ambition. In February 1808, three Russian armies broke into Finland. Like the troops who obeyed the summons from Anjala in 1788, these armies were grievously disappointed to find the fruit not ripe or ready to drop into their hand. Everywhere the Swedish sentiment was decided; the Finns rose in arms, 19,000 strong, and collected around the fortress of Tavasthus. But their resistance was, at first,

not very successful. The south of the province was overpowered. Sveaborg, an impregnable maritime citadel, the Gibraltar of the north, built by Augustin Ehrensvärd, in 1749, on seven islets at the entrance of the harbour of Helsingfors, was shamefully and treasonably surrendered. In May the Russians marched into Helsingfors. Meanwhile the Finlanders had a different fortune in the north, where, under two noble generals, Adlercreutz and Döbeln, they rallied their forces to defend the sea-coast and the Bothnia districts. On April 18, across the frozen river Siikajoki, the Swedes and Finlanders won their first victory, and defeated the Russians again, nine days later, at Revolax. A little later, Döbeln contrived to drive the enemy back from the walls of Nykarleby, and to win a signal victory at Lappo. But on September 14, 1808, Adlercreutz lost all but honour at the terrible battle of Oravais, the most fiercely contested and the decisive engagement of the campaign. Finland was lost, and by the Peace of Fredrikshamn, on September 17, 1809, it was finally annexed, as a grand duchy, to the dominions of Russia.

Such were the events which agitated the childhood of Runeberg. In after life he clearly remembered seeing Döbeln and Kulneff, the Swedish general with the black band round his forehead that concealed the wound in the left temple which he bore away after the battle of Porrosalmi, the Russian general with his bright eyes and long brown beard. He saw them in the streets of Jakobsstad, when he was four years old, and this memory gave a particular colouring to his pictures of the war. Stories were repeated in his presence of the chivalric regard which each

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opponent had for the other—how Kulneff forbade his Cossacks to fire upon Döbeln, and how Döbeln's soldiers respected the person of Kulneff; and when he came to write 'Fänrik Ståls Sägner,' there was to be found among the portraits of friends and patriots a noble tribute to the generous Russian leader also. It is noticeable that in the native literature of Finland, since the annexation, there is none of the tone of smothered insurrection which marks the atmosphere of Poland, or even the dull discontent of Esthonia and Courland. The Swedish Lutherans of Finland have been by far the best treated of all the dependants of the empire. No attempt has been made to force Russian upon them as their official language, no check has been put on the free development of the literature, even when, as in the case of Runeberg, that development has taken the form of deepening and extending the patriotic sentiment. The fact is, that under the easy Russian yoke Finland is almost as free as she was under the Wasas, and has actually attained that intellectual and spiritual independence which Porthan, her great citizen of the eighteenth century, dreamed for her—an independence which consists in liberty of thought, the spread of an education congenial to the nature of the people, and a free development of science and 'belles lettres.'

In the autumn of 1822, Runeberg, then in his nineteenth year, left Wasa to enter a student life in the University of Åbo. He enjoyed few of the luxuries and the amenities which we identify with the existence of an undergraduate. Such a university life as is to be found in Aberdeen or St. Andrews presents a truer analogy with that in a Scandinavian town. Most of the students were poor,

many of them, extremely poor, and among these few had a harder struggle than Runeberg. In the spring of 1827 he successfully closed his examinations, and received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It was a little earlier than this that he made his first appearance before the literary public. One evening in 1826 a party of young people met at the house of Archbishop Tengström, the metropolitan of Finland; a game of forfeits was set on foot, the last of which was lost by a student of the name of Runeberg. The young ladies put their heads together, and finally decided that, as he was suspected of writing verses, he should then and there compose a Hymn to the Sun. This he accomplished, nothing loth; and it was so highly approved of that Sjöström, then considered one of the chief Finnish poets, printed it forthwith in a newspaper of which he was the editor. The young poet had hardly received his degree, when an event occurred which entirely revolutionised his career. On a mild September evening in 1827, as the good people of Åbo were going to bed, they were alarmed to hear the tocsin furiously sounded from the tower of their cathedral. A girl had spilt some tallow, the tallow had taken fire, and in half an hour the wood-built city was in a blaze. The fire spread with infinite velocity, engulfed the university first, and then the cathedral; before the morning broke, not an eighth of the flourishing capital of Finland still existed. In the confusion that ensued, the university was transferred to Helsingfors, a larger town further east on the Gulf of Finland, and this place has since then been the seat of government. Runeberg was left to choose his career. He decided to leave the sea-coast, where he associated only with educated persons using the

Swedish language, and to penetrate into the heart of the country, by so doing to gain a knowledge of his beautiful fatherland and its singular aborigines. He therefore accepted a tutorship in a family living at Saarijärvi, a sequestered village in the heart of the country, on the high road between the Gulf of Bothnia and the White Sea. Here he had plenty of leisure to study the primitive life of the country people, among the desolate and impressive scenery of the interior. Saarijärvi lies on the extreme arm of one of the great winding lakes, that seem to meander for ever between forest and moorland, thickly dotted with innumerable islands. Round it stretch in every direction the interminable beech-woods, muffling the air with such a silence that the woodman's axe falls with a mysterious, almost with a sinister sound. There are few spots in Europe so utterly remote and inaccessible; the solitude is broken only by the farmer's cart, the footstep of some wandering Finn or Quain, or the voice of a Russian pedlar from Archangel singing loudly to keep himself company through the woods. Here it was that Runeberg buried himself for three years. He had a good many books, mainly the Greek poets; he studied hard, whether nature was his master or Homer, and he set himself studiously to unlearn whatever his teachers had taught him of the art of Swedish poetry. The ruling genius of Sweden at that date was Tegnér, the famous poet of 'Frithiofs saga,' in whom the peculiarly Swedish vice of style, which consists in cultivating empty and sonorous phrases, had reached its climax. Tegnér was a poet of great genius, but he had not the intellectual courage or the inclination to cast behind him the poetic phraseology of his day. Instead of doing this,

instead of adopting a realistic style, he simply gilded and polished the old 'ideal' language, and the practical result of his brilliant productions was to paralyse poetry in Sweden for half a century. It was right that the voice which was to do away for ever with this glitter and fustian should come out of the wilderness. Not in Lund or Upsala, but in an unknown village in the heart of the forests of Finland, the seed was germinating which was destined to fill the whole country with a flower of a new sort, a veritable wood-rose to take the place of the fabulous asphodel. In Tegnér the old forces that battled in Swedish literature had found a common ground, and, as it were, an apotheosis. There were no longer academic writers who loved the old French rules, 'Phosphorists' who outdid Tieck and Novalis in mysticism, Gothic poets who sought to reconcile the antique Scandinavian myths to elegant manners and modern thoughts; all these warring groups united in Tegnér or were extinguished by him. Between Tegnér and Runeberg the natural link is wanting. This link properly consists, it appears to me, in Longfellow, who is an anomaly in American literature, but who has the full character of a Swedish poet, and who, had he been born in Sweden, would have completed exactly enough the chain of style that ought to unite the idealism of Tegnér to the realism of Runeberg. The poem of 'Evangeline' has really no place in Anglo-Saxon poetry; in Swedish it would accurately express a stage in the progress of literature which is now unfilled. It is known that Mr. Longfellow has cultivated the language of Sweden with much assiduity, and has contemplated literary life in that country with all the unconscious affection of a changeling.

The years spent by Runeberg at Saarijärvi were occupied in almost continual literary production. He wrote here the most important and most original works of his early manhood. Among these must be mentioned 'Svartsjukans nätter' ('Nights of Jealousy'), a large part of his 'Lyrical Poems,' and his great epic or idyl of 'Elgskyttarne,' or 'The Elk Hunters.' Of these the lyrical poems have lately been translated in their entirety in a version remarkable for care and scholarship.[1] They were originally published, together with a collection of Servian Folksongs, in 1830, and formed Runeberg's first published volume. This publication followed close upon the young writer's reappearance in the civilised world; he left his hermitage in that year to accept the post of amanuensis to the council of the university, now settled in Helsingfors. The volume was dedicated to Franzén, the poet-bishop of Hernösand, one of the most illustrious persons Finland had produced; a poem addressed to this eminent man breathes the same fresh and unconventional air that animates the body of the book itself, and also contains not a few traces of the study of the poet eulogised. In fact, the influence of Franzén is strong throughout the early writings of Runeberg—a pure and genial, but not robust influence, which did the young poet no harm, and out of which he very speedily grew. Franzén wrote to him a letter full of tenderness and prophecy. 'I know,' he had the generosity to write to this unknown beginner, 'that it is a great poet that Finland is about to produce in you.' The

[1] Johan Ludvig Runeberg's 'Lyrical Songs, Idylls, and Epigrams,' done into English by Eirikr Magnusson, and E. H. Palmer. London, 1878.

perfume of the violet and the song of the lark were strong in this book of thoroughly sincere and unaffected verses, and the public was not slow in acknowledging the Bishop of Hernösand to have been a true prophet.

In 1831 he attempted to win larger laurels than the coteries of Helsingfors could offer him. He sent in to the annual prize-giving of the Swedish Academy a poem of considerable length, 'Grafven i Perrho' ('The Grave in Perrho'), a work which for the first time displayed to advantage his rich severity of style, his epic force and freshness. It was the story of a grave in the wilds of Finland, the grave of an old man and his six tall sons, and told with infinite beauty the tragic circumstances that laid them there. The Swedish Academy, unable to overlook so much originality, but unwilling to crown a realist who disregarded the conventionalities so rudely, rewarded the poet with the small gold medal—a distinction commonly given to very mediocre merit. Still this was a measure of national recognition: and, in the glee of success, Runeberg married one of the young ladies who had set him his first lesson in verse five years before, at the house of Archbishop Tengström. This year, indeed, proved a turning-point in his life, for he received a post which bound him to the capital; in reward for a learned tractate comparing the 'Medea' of Euripides with the 'Medea' of Seneca, he was appointed Lecturer on Roman Literature at the University. From this time forward every step was an advance; he felt himself more and more sure of his genius, of his representative position in so small a state as Finland, where he began to take a place as literary oracle. He now undertook the labours of journalism, and founded

a newspaper, the 'Helsingfors Morgonblad,' which he edited with such success that it became the most influential journal in the grand duchy. Runeberg remained sole editor until 1837, and during these years he made it the medium of spreading far and wide the principles of culture and literary taste. All the best critical writings of the poet, all which is preserved in the sixth volume of his collected works, originally saw the light in the columns of the 'Helsingfors Morgonblad.'

The greatest result of his solitude at Saarijärvi remained, however, still unknown till in 1832 he published his 'Elgskyttarne,' or 'The Elk Hunters.' This poem marks an epoch in Swedish literature. It is as remarkable in its way as the novels of Zola; it begins a new class of work, it is one of the masterpieces of scrupulous realism, a true product of the nineteenth century. The form is the same adopted by Voss, Goethe, Tegnér, Kingsley, and many more North European poets for narrative work—the dactylic hexameter. But the Swedish language suits this exotic growth much better than German or English: there are more compact masses of rolling sound to be obtained, it is far more easy to observe the rules of position. Runeberg seems to have gone straight back to Homer for his model; and though there are moments when we feel that he could not entirely forget 'Hermann und Dorothea,' his hexameters have as a rule a more pure and classical character than Goethe's. The plan of the poem is as follows. The local magnate of an inland Finnish district, the Kommissarie or Agent, has ordered all the chief men of the place to meet at his house for an elk-hunt next morning. The worthy farmer, Petrus, at home

in his large guest-room, prepares, half overcome with sleep, for the duties of the morrow, furbishing up his gun, and listening to his wife Anna, as she busies herself in the house and gossips. The door opens, and Anna's brother, Mathias, a rich farmer from a distant parish, whose wife had died about a year before, appears on an improvised visit. He has scarcely sat down to supper, when Anna commences to mourn over the desolate condition of his children, and urges him to find a wife to take care of his fine home at Kuru. Petrus proposes the beauty of their parish, Hedda, the daughter of Zacharias, and the pair paint her virtues in such glowing terms that Mathias begins to wish to see her. It is agreed that he shall follow the hunt next morning, and be introduced to her incidentally at the meet. Next morning Petrus is waked by the noise of a quarrel between Pavo, one of his servants, and Aron, a beggar to whom, after the Finnish custom, he is exercising hospitality. He rises in the dark winter morning, and he and Mathias start for the rendezvous. It is a ringing frosty day, or rather night, for the stars are still brilliant overhead. Petrus supplies his brother-in-law with an old Swedish rifle, a jewel of a weapon, as he explains in an episode. It was with this rifle that Petrus's uncle, Joannes, picked out a spy at an incredible distance in 1808, and this leads to other tales of the great war with which they beguile the way to the Agent's. At last they reach the house, and receive a warm welcome; already the guest-room is full of people, and among the first they meet are Zacharias and his lovely daughter Hedda. There are, moreover, a group of Russian pedlars from Archangel who recognise Mathias, and loudly praise the hospitality

they lately enjoyed at his house in Kuru. One of the pedlars, the brown-bearded Ontrus, thinks this an excellent opportunity for hawking his wares, and we have an exquisite picture of the girls darting like swallows around his pack as he displays his treasures. But alas! they are poor, and there are no purchases. Mathias conceives that this is the moment for him to advance. He buys presents for them all, but the most costly and most tempting for Hedda. Petrus cannot help paying the beautiful girl a compliment in these words:—

As when a cloud in spring hangs bright o'er the trees on a hill-side,
Hushed is the underwood all, and the birches stand mutely admiring,
Watching the pride of the morning, the rose-hued breast of the cloudlet,
Till from the heart of it issues a breeze, and the shoots on the branches
Tenderly wave, and their leaves half unfolded shiver with pleasure,
Not less quivers the youth when he gazes on Hedda and hears her.[1]

Hedda finds herself in a shy confusion, and sends Mathias a grateful glance when he reproves his brother-in-law for this persiflage. The Agent now appears, dawn is breaking, and the hunters all go out into the snow, Mathias still dreaming of the beauty of Hedda. However, they call upon him for a story, and he rouses himself to describe, in the most powerful and brilliant language, the killing of a bear. They find the elk on a wooded island, and the hunt begins; but we are transported back to the Agent's guest-room, where the Archangel traders have made themselves cosy with the girls, and where the youngest of them, the handsome Tobias, excited with beer and love, begins to dance about, and to offer the indignant Hedda all his wares in exchange for a kiss.

[1] Appendix T.

His elder brother, Ontrus, turns him out of doors, where he screams and sings and jumps about till he drops down fast asleep. Ontrus gravely presses on Hedda the advantages she would find in marrying this his scapegrace brother, till she at last escapes from his importunity by joining the old women upstairs. Ontrus then has a violent quarrel with a spiteful ancient dame, the cripple Rebecca, and at last falls fast asleep upon the floor. This odd scene is described with great humour, and in minute detail, like a Teniers. Meanwhile the hunt proceeds; four elks are shot, of which Mathias bags two with the famous Swedish gun. On the way home he asks Zacharias for leave to court his daughter. No sooner has he entered the guest-room than he finds an opportunity of speaking to Hedda, and is on the point of tenderly pressing his suit, when the abominable old Rebecca puts in an oar and spoils it all. The girl flies to an upper room, but Mathias sends Petrus after her. A very quaint and charming scene ensues. Petrus sits down with his pipe opposite the conscious maiden, and recounts at great length the virtues and the possessions of this 'brave Mathias from Kuru,'—how fine his farmstead is, how wild and fertile his fields are,—taking care to explain that they consist of rich black top-soil on a clayey bottom. These poetic details move the maiden less than an eloquent recital of the vigour and excellence of the possessor, and Petrus begs her not to refuse because Mathias is no longer a romantic youth. He perorises thus:—

Never so rich is in blossoms a field in the heart of the summer,
Child, as in pleasures the way to the grave if we walk with contentment;
If we but step with a care to the road, nor let Hope the enchantress

Leap from the path at our feet, and persuade us another were fairer.
Only the fool is beguiled, but he follows and wantonly wavers,
Never at peace, till death suddenly falls on him, sighing, and takes him.[1]

Hedda finds it difficult to reply, but at last she manages to murmur a pretty and modest assent. And she sits awhile, weeping for pleasure, and patting Petrus's hand, until he weeps too, to keep her company. Then Mathias comes, and all is happiness. We are now taken back to the homestead at Tjäderkulle, where Anna sits at home, while Aron the beggar plays national airs upon the jew's-harp—an instrument, perhaps, hitherto unknown to epic poetry. At Anna's desire he tells the terrible story of his life: how one bad season after another ruined him, till at last his wife died of starvation, and he himself nearly went mad. He has scarcely closed this tragical recital, when Petrus enters, and proposes they should all immediately proceed to the Agent's house, to be present at the betrothal of Mathias; this they accordingly do, and the poem ends with a spirited and humorous picture of the scene at the ceremony.

The next few years of Runeberg's life were full of work and happiness. In 1833 he published a second volume of lyrical poems, and improved his economical position by lecturing on Greek literature in the university. It was about the same time that he met the indefatigable collector of Finnish legends, the famous Dr. Elias Lönnroth, then still occupied in putting together the ancient epic of the 'Kalevala.' In this new-found treasure-house of mythological wealth Runeberg took the keenest interest, and translated the beginning of it into Swedish.

[1] Appendix U.

In 1836 Lönnroth made himself and Finland famous throughout Europe by his publication of the original text. It is perhaps fortunate that Runeberg did not carry out his original idea of translating the whole of the 'Kalevala,' a work well performed by less representative hands than his. In 1834 he had attempted dramatic creation, in the form of a comedy in verse, 'Friaren från Landet' ('The Country Lover'), which was acted and printed in 'Morgonblad,' but which the poet would never allow to be reprinted among his works. In 1836 appeared a poem far more worthy of his genius, the delicate idyl of 'Hanna.' This also is written in hexameters, and closes the first period of his poetic career. It was dedicated 'To the First Love,' and it forms, in fact, a kind of modern 'Romeo and Juliet.' In a quiet Finland parsonage the pastor sits in his study, calmly smoking his pipe, and gazing over the hazy landscape. It is a warm summer afternoon, and he sits waiting for his son, who has just passed his examination at Åbo. The lad has been told that if he passes he may bring home with him some poor comrade to spend the vacation in the country; and he has passed, so a stranger is expected. In another room sits the pastor's lovely daughter, Hanna, weaving; but the perfume of the lilacs, blossoming at the open window, troubles her fancy, and she leans out into the warm air, her brain full of little graceful vanities, the pretty whims of a spoilt child. At this moment the old housekeeper, Susanna, enters, and tells her to dress as quickly as she can to receive the Bailiff, a man of fifty, rich and respected, who has just come to pay her father a visit. From some words the portly gentleman has let fall, she

fancies that his mission is to ask Hanna for his wife. The girl is much fluttered, but not displeased at this notion: to be the chief lady of the place is flattering to her vanity, and she does not comprehend what it is to be a wife. Her father comes to call her down, and though she clings to Susanna in her confusion, she is absolutely obliged to open the study-door at last.

Blushing she stood at the door, in the exquisite charm of her shyness,
Coy as a strip of the sea that is caught by the rush of the morning,
Slender and quivering in rosy dismay through the gloom of the woodlands.[1]

The Bailiff is hardly less confused than she; but her father, who greatly desires the match, expends much flowing speech, till the suitor succeeds in gaining confidence, and expatiates on the charms of his house and garden, the latter being so well-cultured and protected that sometimes, in very warm summers, they manage to ripen an apple. He apologises much for his age, though this has not occurred to Hanna as an objection. They give her some days to make up her mind, and she flies to her own room. There a girl, half friend, half dependent, called Johanna, is taken into her confidence, and violently objects to the match, advising Hanna to wait for some young suitor. Hanna, a little shaken in resolution, is desiring more light on this difficult subject, when suddenly her brother and his friend arrive. The Bailiff has by this time gone, and the pastor is left free to welcome his son. The friend is discovered to be the son of the poet whose bosom companion the pastor was at college, and who died early. He is a handsome, ardent, ingenuous youth, and the old man is delighted thus to

[1] Appendix V.

renew the early alliance. Hanna enters, and there is mutual love at first sight. With him it is conscious, with her it is an unconscious trouble and dismay for which she cannot account. The pastor desires that they should embrace one another as if they were brother and sister, and Hanna kisses him lightly, like a summer wind, and disappears, to think it all over in her own room.

'So she thought to herself, and her thoughts were less words than a perfume.' She smiles to think how fresh and radiant he is, and then she weeps—not, she says, for love, but in anger that he, a young poor student, should dare to look so charming and so confidential. They have the evening meal together, and then her brother insists that she and the friend should go with him for a long stroll together. They proceed down to the lake, and the brother expatiates on the scene, a truly inland landscape, unlike the coast of the Gulf of Finland at Åbo.

'Look at the lake in the sunset,' he answered, 'look you, how unlike
'Tis to the sea as it moans round the rock-built shores of your childhood!
Here there are verdure and colour and life; quaint nnmberless islands
Shoot from the breast of the wave, and, gracefully swaying on each one,
Clumps of underwood offer the worn-out mariner shadow.
Follow me down to the beach, calm strip between meadow and water,
Here you may glance o'er a wider expanse, discerning the hamlet
Dimly sequestered afar, and the steeple that shines in the distance.'[1]

They continue their walk in the soft and magical air of a northern sunset, while their voices grow intenser and graver. A talk about wild birds reveals the tenderness of

[1] Appendix W.

Hanna's nature, and she is led to tell, with exquisite pathos, the story of the death of an old fisherman whose hut they pass. At last the brother confesses that he is betrothed to the friend's sister. They all seat themselves in the purple twilight round a bubbling well, and subdued by the witchcraft of the sound of the water, the perfume of the earth and the colour of the heavens, the lovers, who only met a few hours before, obey a sovereign impulse and fall into each other's arms. The brother is delighted; all three proceed through the deepening dusk to ask the father's blessing, which he grants with some surprise, but with a very fairly good grace.

The great landmarks in a poet's life are events which would scarcely be worthy of mention in the biography of a man of action. The solitude at Saarijärvi, the public career in Helsingfors, had each in succession moulded and ripened the powers of Runeberg's mind; a third step, the last in his life, was to develop those powers to their utmost, and to prepare him for their natural decay. In 1837 he accepted a professorate of Latin Literature at the College of Borgå, and removed thither with his family. This quiet little town remained his home for forty years, until his death. Borgå, which the long residence of Runeberg has rendered famous, lies some thirty miles east of Helsingfors, close to the sea, and on the high road into Russia. It has a cathedral and a bishop, and enjoys a certain sleepy distinction that prevents it from becoming too tamely provincial; but nothing can avail to make it other than a very hushed and dreamy little place. The poet became exceedingly attached to Borgå, and soon fell into that absolute, almost

mechanical round of life which so often marks the later years of men of genius. In this quietude, which the college and the cathedral preserved from entire stagnation, he was able to write without distraction, and with the utmost regularity. He was now recognised as a leading poet throughout Scandinavia: in 1839 the Swedish Academy, of its own free will, voted him the large gold medal, the highest compliment in its gift, and had he been a citizen of Sweden he would without doubt have been forthwith elected into that stately body. Baron von Beskow, on behalf of the Academy, conveyed to the young Finnish poet a series of compliments that could not fail to gratify him. It was indeed a period of transition. The old writers were passing away; several eminent poets of the elder generation had just died—Wadman, Nicander, Wallin. Tegnér was at the height of his glory; there was no young man so fit to be considered heir apparent of the skaldship as Runeberg. He was thus urged on to still higher attainment. His first work at Borgå was of doubtful success. 'Julqvällen,' or 'Christmas Eve,' is an idyl of the same class as 'The Elk Hunters' and 'Hanna,' but it possesses neither the force of the first nor the sweetness and colour of the second. It is not even a complete story; it is merely an episode, and an episode not specially suited to poetic treatment. At the same time it is worked out with even finer dramatic tact and insight. An old crippled soldier, Pistol, is stumbling from his hut in the woods, through the snow, to the house of the Major, who has invited him to come to spend the festive Christmas Eve with his servants. Much jollity, however, cannot be expected: everyone has some near relative away in the

Russian armies fighting the Turk, and who knows if he be alive or dead? Pistol thinks of his only son, the apple of his eye, of whom he has for a long while heard nothing. While he tramps on, he hears a carriage behind him, and the clear voice of the Major's younger daughter, Augusta, calling to him to get in and ride. She is the light of the whole parish, and a universal favourite. Her elder sister, whose husband is away in the war, and her mother, spend their days in weeping and sighing, and nearly drive the old Major out of his wits; Augusta alone tries to keep up something like cheerfulness at home. When they arrive at the house, Pistol goes into the kitchen, Augusta into the guest-room, where she finds the usual scene of petulant recrimination going on. Even she is almost in despair. But by degrees she manages to bring peace into the house again, and the way in which the Christmas Eve is spent, above stairs and below, is described very brightly and humorously. In the midst of it all there is a great noise in the courtyard, lights are brought, and it is found that the Lieutenant, Augusta's brother-in-law, has come back safe and sound. There are universal rejoicings, until he comes to explain that poor Pistol's son has been killed by the enemy in a skirmish. This renews their regret, and Pistol is almost broken-hearted, thinking of the desolate life he must now live, alone in the woods. But the Major declares that he will not allow him to go back to that solitude; he must in future take up his abode as one of the retainers of the great house, and in the prospect of so much kindness he is a little consoled for his loss. In 'Julqvällen' Runeberg returns to the rigidly realistic style of 'Elgskyttarne,' which he had

partly abandoned in 'Hanna' in favour of a tenderer and more romantic feeling.

In the same year, 1841, he published a very different poem, and a more successful one. He had hitherto devoted himself entirely to the study of Finnish character and the scenery of Finland; in 'Nadeschda' he has drawn from his experience of Russian character and manners, and has in fact written one of those Builínas or national Russian epics about which Mr. Ralston has told us much and promised us more in his charming 'Songs of the Russian People.' This curious poem is closely allied to the lyrical stories that Ruibnikof collected on the shores of Lake Onega from the lips of the peasants; it is composed from the peasant's point of view, and shows a singular insight into Russian popular feeling. Until Mr. Ralston completes his study of the Builínas, it is not easy for a non-Russian student to understand what is exactly the form of these curious epics; but Runeberg has probably been correct in composing 'Nadeschda' in a great variety of unrhymed, strongly accentuated measures. Nadeschda is a lovely Russian girl, a serf, and when the poem opens we find her wandering beside a tributary of the Moskwa, stirring the flowers with her fair feet, and dreaming of some vague lover, who will come to marry her. She bends over the water, and while she is admiring her own reflection, she remembers that this beauty is the beauty of a slave, and can be bought and sold. At this moment Miljutin, her foster-father, comes to summon her to the festival of welcoming Prince Woldmar, their master, back to the castle. Nadeschda will not come, full of this new revolt against the humiliation of her birth. At last

Miljutin persuades her to come, and leaves her that she may adorn herself; but she refuses to bathe in the river, to girdle herself with flowers, or to put on her saint's-day garments. She weaves a belt of thistles and other dolorous herbs, and binding them round her common dress, she follows Miljutin. Meanwhile Prince Woldmar is approaching in a golden chariot, accompanied by his brother Dmitri, who is burning with jealousy to see the noble estate which his brother has inherited. Just outside the gates they stop, at Dmitri's desire, and while the *cortége* waits, the brothers, with their falcons on their wrists, pass out into the woodland. They send their hawks after a dove, who flies in terror into Woldmar's bosom, and Woldmar's falcon kills Dmitri's. At this the evil brother's rage increases, and he demands a ransom. Woldmar promises him the fairest of his slaves, and at that moment they perceive Nadeschda passing through the forest towards the castle. They regain their carriage, but these incidents have sufficed to throw Woldmar into a rage, and as they drive up through the ranks of gaily-dressed retainers, his eye catches one girl who has only a coil of straw in her hair and thistles for a girdle. He stops and shouts to her to come to him; it is Nadeschda. He storms at her for her disrespect, and swears she shall instantly marry the basest of his grooms; but she, glancing timidly at him, perceives that he is the lover of her dream, and she flushes rosy red with shame and sorrow. He falls under the spell of her beauty and loves her, even before he has finished his reproof. Dmitri, also, perceives her loveliness, and claims her as the ransom for his falcon. But Woldmar gives Nadeschda her freedom, and then

brusquely turning to Dmitri, says that he only promised to give him a slave, and that this is a free woman. Dmitri, excessively piqued, sends out the same night to secure her, but she has disappeared, and he cannot discover what has become of her. Two years are now supposed to pass, and we are presented to Nadeschda, a lovely and accomplished woman, who has been protected and educated in hiding by some noble ladies, friends of Prince Woldmar. He comes to visit her, and we are given one of Runeberg's characteristic love-scenes, full of tenderness and highly-wrought passion. He explains to her that they have everything to fear from his mother's pride and his brother's jealousy. In the next canto, however, he has resolved to brave these dangers, and bringing Nadeschda to his castle, he is about to be privately married to her, when Prince Dmitri hears of it, and communicates with his mother, the Princess Natalia Feodorowna. The proud dowager determines that, sooner than her son shall marry a serf, she will herself denounce him to the Empress. We then have a very dramatic scene. Potemkin is presented lounging on a rich ottoman, and scolding General Kutusoff and other eminent soldiers for the laxity of their regiments: he has some insolent word for each, and finally bids them all to leave his presence, except Prince Woldmar. Potemkin charges him with his intended *mêsalliance* as with a crime, tells him of the Empress's displeasure, sends him off forthwith to Tomsk, and gives his castle, with Nadeschda in it, into his mother's care. Nadeschda is turned out of doors, and returns to the hut of her foster father Miljutin. Thither Dmitri follows her, expecting an easy conquest, but her dignity and her

despair overcome him, and he consents to leave her unmolested. The Princess Natalia ruins the district with her tyrannies, and the serfs are in the last condition of destitution, when suddenly the Empress announces that she is coming to the castle to spend the night. To hide the desolation of the scene, the Princess has some painted semblances of cottages set up along the opposite hill-side, and when the Empress arrives, she is so pleased at this appearance of comfort that she insists on going to visit the cottagers themselves. The Princess is accordingly disgraced, Nadeschda throws herself at the Empress's feet and is pardoned, and Prince Woldmar returns to celebrate his marriage.

The position of Runeberg at Borgå became more and more firmly settled. In 1842 he was offered and accepted the chair of Greek. A third volume of lyrical poems, in 1843, and the cycle of romances entitled 'Kung Fjalar,' in 1844, testified to the freshness and ascending vigour of his imagination. 'Kung Fjalar,' in fact, marks the very apex of his powers; Runeberg never exceeded this tragic work in the admirable later creations of his brain. It has an audacity, an originality that raise it to the first order of lyric writing. It is very difficult, by making a cold-blooded analysis of such a poem, to give the reader the least notion of its beauty. The plot is as follows. A mythical king of Gauthiod, Fjalar, has fought many battles and won as many victories; his hair is silver, and he now determines to live at home in peace, and keep watch over the prosperity of his people. It is Christmas time, and there are revellings in Fjalar's castle. As his warriors gather round him, he tells them that he desires

rest; he swears that by his own help, resting on his own will alone, he will lead the land up into wealth and happiness. As he makes this oath, an unknown stranger strides up the hall; he uncovers his face—it is Dargar the seer, the all-wise prophet, who hates Fjalar. He prophesies woe to Gauthiod and its king; and, as a last sorrow, Fjalar is to see before he dies his only daughter locked in the burning embrace of his only son. At a curse so fearful, silence and consternation rule in the hall: no one dares to speak till Fjalar orders the nurse to bring Hjalmar and Gerda, his infant children. He takes one babe on each arm, not knowing which to sacrifice, till at last his warriors persuade him to leave the boy to reign after him. One of them, Sjolf, approaches, and lifting Gerda from the king's embrace, takes her out into the night, and flings her, 'a laughing sacrifice,' off the cliff into the roaring sea. Fjalar forbids her name to be mentioned again, and then walks out in silence. The next canto takes us twenty years onward. In the Ossianic kingdom of Morven, the three sons of the king are all in love with his foster-daughter Oihonna, a lovely being mysteriously saved from the waves. Each of the sons tries to win her heart by a song. This is Gall's, the eldest:—

Come, Oihonna, follow my life!
The hunter loves thee, rosy cloud!
The tall prince of the mountains
Prays thee to share his upland footways.

Hast thou seen from thy mountain rocks
The broad expanses smile in the morning?
Hast thou seen the wakening sunrise
Drink the dew of the trembling haze?

Remember the sound of the windy woodlands,
Leaves that stir in the wing of the wind,
Birds' riot, and the intoxicate
Brook that flies through the sounding boulders!

Dost thou know how beats the heart
When to the noise of the horn and hounds
Rustle the bushes, and lo! the stag
Checks his leap and is here before us?

Maiden, lov'st thou the sombre twilight
That melts to the shine of the dewy stars?
Come, from the summit of Mellmor
Let us watch how the night is born.

O how oft have I sat on the mountain
When in the west the sun has been closing
His glimmering gates, and the red glow
Slowly faded out of the sky.

I have drunk the cool of the spirit of even,
Seen the shadows walk over the valleys,
Let my thoughts go wander
Around the sea of nightly silence.

Lovely is life on the cloudy heights,
'Tis easy to breathe in the fragrant woods;
Ah! be my bride! I will open
A thousand pleasures around thy heart.[1]

So sings Gall the hunter, but in vain; nor can Rurmar, the bard, nor Clesamor the warrior soften her crystal heart. Next we have a scene in which Oihonna, 'the huntress of the swan-like arm,' is hunting the deer in the valley of Lora, in company with her friend the singer Gylnandyne. She sings the saga which tells how Hjalmar desired his father, King Fjalar, to let him go a-viking, and how, when the king would not, Hjalmar got away by stealth and won glory at sea. At this moment Oihonna is summoned back to Morven. When she arrives there, the Scotch king

[1] Appendix X.

tells her of the circumstances of her coming to that land, how a captain, sailing one Christmas night by King Fjalar's castle, found a girl-child in the sea, brought her to Morven, and dying, bequeathed her to the king. Hjalmar, the terrible vikingr, now appears and attacks Morven. He fights with each of the sons of King Morannel in turn, and kills them; the youngest, Clesamor, fights so well that Morven trembles to hear a late half-dying echo from Ossian's heroic days, but falls at last. Morannel dies of grief in the arms of Oihonna. We then return to Gauthiod, where, from the heights above his castle, Fjalar, now extremely old, gazes in content and self-gratulation over the land that has prospered under his firm will and peaceful rule. He thinks of the old curse only to deride it, when suddenly the evil seer, Dargar, arrives, and denounces the king. The hour of the vengeance of the gods is, he says, at hand; and he points to a golden speck on the horizon, the dragon of Hjalmar returning across the sea. They watched the approaching fleet; the prows grate the shore, and Hjalmar slowly ascends the mountain with a bloody sword in his hand. He explains that from the court of Morven he bore off Oihanna, a lovely and a loving bride; that on their homeward voyage she told the story of her birth, and that he perceived her too late to be his sister. With the sword he holds he slew her, and now he slays himself before his father's throne. The sun goes down, and when they turn to King Fjalar he is dead. Even from so slight an outline as this it may be seen how lofty a rendering this is of the old theme that wise men are powerless fighting against the gods. Fjalar is great, virtuous, and humane, but because he does not make the

gods witnesses to his oath, he brings down upon himself and his race their slow but implacable vengeance. The style in which this poem is composed is exceedingly cold and severe, with delicate lyrical passages introduced without any detriment to the general solemnity. The work is like a noble frieze in marble, where among the sublime figures of the gods and their victims, the sculptor has sought to introduce an element of tenderer beauty in the flying graces of a garment or the innocent sweetness of a child's averted head.

We have now arrived at the work which did most to give Runeberg a name throughout all classes and in all the provinces of the North. It was in 1848 that he published the first series of 'Fänrik Ståls Sägner' ('Ensign Stål's Stories'), a series of narrative poems dealing with the war of independence in 1808. The cycle professes to be said and sung by an old ensign, a veteran from the days of Döbeln and Adlercreutz, who recites to a young student all he can remember about the war. Similar stories Runeberg himself had heard, as a boy of sixteen, from an old corporal at Ruovesi. He himself, as we have said, dimly remembered seeing the Swedish and Russian armies pass through his birth-place, Jakobsstad. The publication of these national poems, breathing the full perfume of patriotic regret, the mingled tone of war-song and of elegy, created such a sensation as is but poorly comparable with the success of Mr. Tennyson's 'Charge of the Light Brigade.' The volume was such a one as Mr. Dobell's 'England in Time of War' might have proved in the hands of a far saner and more judicious poet. The first series appeared in 1848, the second in 1860; and

with one poem on the treacherous surrender of Sveaborg, which was suppressed at the supplication of the descendants of the traitor, there are thirty-five pieces in all. They are varied in subject and style; they describe everyone from the king and the generals down to village maidens and 'drunken privates of the Buff.' 'Fänrik Ståls Sägner' opens with the famous hymn which has become the national anthem of Finland, 'Vårt land, vårt land.' This is one of the noblest strains of patriotic verse ever indited; it lifts Runeberg at once to the level of Callicles or Campbell, to the first rank of poets in whom art and ardour, national sentiment and power of utterance, are equally blended. Unhappily, in its crystal simplicity and its somewhat elaborate verse form, it is practically untranslatable. To enjoy it is one of the first and best rewards of him who takes the trouble to learn Swedish. The old Ensign is next described, and the events that led to his repeating these tales of his; and then the tales themselves begin. Some of the figures that stand out against the background of the war are of a marvellous freshness and realistic force. The stupid Sven Dufva, who had an heroic heart; Lieutenant Zidén, who cheered on his little troop from Wasa; Wilhelm von Schwerin, the boy-hero; Otto von Fieandt, who uses his whip instead of a sword; General Adlercreutz fighting at Siikajoki. All are good; it may almost be said that not one is poor or weak. Perhaps the most exquisite, the most inimitable of all is 'Soldatgossen,' the boy whose father—a brave young soldier—fell at the battle of Lappo, and who is only longing to be fifteen years old that he may take up his rifle and go to fight the Russians. The absolute

perfection of this poem, which it would be ruinous to fail to give, is too terrifying for a translator to attempt. Such a poem is like the strange draughts that Persian monarchs boasted; it takes its colour wholly from the vase that holds it, and would seem mere trash poured into a less cunning goblet. As a ballad less fine, and in a form less exacting, I venture to attempt a version of 'Torpflickan':—

THE VILLAGE GIRL.

The sun went down and evening came, the quiet summer even,
A mass of glowing purple lay between the farms and heaven;
A weary troop of men went by, their day's hard labour done,
Tired and contented, towards their home they wended one by one.

Their work was done, their harvest reaped, a goodly harvest truly,
A well-appointed band of foes all slain or captured newly;
At dawn against this armed band they had gone forth to fight,
And all had closed in victory before the fall of night.

Close by the field where all day long the hard hot strife was raging,
A cottage by the wayside stood, half-desolate and ageing,
And on its worn low steps there sat a silent girl, and mused
And watched the troop come slowly by, in weary line confused.

She looked like one who sought a friend, she scanned each man's face nearly.
High burned the colour in her cheek, too high for sunset merely;
She sat so quiet, looked so warm, so flushed with secret heat,
It seemed she listened as she gazed, and felt her own heart beat.

But as she saw the troop march by, and darkness round them stealing,
To every file, to every man, her anxious eye appealing
Seemed muttering in a shy distress a question without speech,
More silent than a sigh itself, too anguished to beseech.

But when the men had all gone past, and not a word was spoken,
The poor girl's courage failed at last, and all her strength was broken.
She wept not loud, but on her hand her weary forehead fell,
And large tears followed one by one as from a burning well.

'Why dost thou weep? For hope may break, just where the gloom
is deepest!
O daughter, hear thy mother's voice, a needless tear thou weepest;
He whom thy eyes were seeking for, whose face thou couldst not see,
He is not dead: he thought of love, and still he lives for thee.

He thought of love; I counselled him to shield himself from danger,
I taught him how to slip the fight, and leave them like a stranger;
By force they made him march with them, but weep not, rave not thus,
I know he will not choose to die from happy life and us.'

Shivering the maiden rose like one whom awful dreams awaken,
As if some grim foreboding all her soul in her had shaken;
She lingered not, she sought the place where late had raged the fight,
And stole away and swiftly fled and vanished out of sight.

An hour went by, another hour, the night had closed around her;
The moonshot clouds were silver-white, but darkness hung below
them.
'She lingers long; O daughter, come, thy toil is all in vain,
To-morrow, ere the dawn is red, thy bridegroom's here again!'

The daughter came; with silent steps she came to meet her mother,
The pallid eyelids strained no more with tears she fain would
smother;
But colder than the wind at night the hand that mother pressed,
And whiter than a winter cloud the maiden's cheek and breast.

'Make me a grave, O mother dear; my days on earth are over!
The only man that fled to-day, that coward, was my lover;
He thought of me and of himself, the battle field he scanned,
And then betrayed his brothers' hope and shamed his father's land.

When past our door the troop marched by, and I their ranks had
numbered,
I wept to think that like a man among the dead he slumbered;
I sorrowed, but my grief was mild, it had no bitter weight,
I would have lived a thousand years to mourn his noble fate.

O mother, I have looked for him where'er the dead are lying,
But none of all the stricken bear his features, calm in dying;
Now will I live no more on earth in shame to sit and sigh,
He lies not there among the dead, and therefore I will die.'[1]

[1] Appendix Y.

There can be little doubt that in 'Fänrik Ståls Sägner' Finland has presented Swedish literature with the most intimate, glowing, and original poetical work that it possesses. And it is very interesting to note how much of what is most notable in the history of Sweden has proceeded from this desolate and distant province, now hopelessly separated from the realm itself. In the annals of statecraft, of the church, of war, and of the navy, the names of Finns are singularly prominent. In literature, some of the leading writers in each century—Frese in the seventeenth, Creutz and Kellgren in the eighteenth, Franzén, Fredrika Bremer, and Zakris Topelius in the nineteenth—have been natives of Finland; but of all these Runeberg is the greatest. On May 13, 1848, the 'Vårt Land,' to which music had been set by the greatest of Finnish composers, Pacius, was sung outside the city of Helsingfors, and the ringing tones of the new National Anthem were taken up by thousands of voices. This was the crowning day in the life of Runeberg.

By this time he had outlived the economical pressure of his earlier years. In 1844 he had been made titular Professor, and decorated with the order of the North Star by the King of Sweden, Oscar I. In 1847 he was unanimously elected Rector of the College of Borgå. In 1851 he achieved the only foreign journey he ever took, namely, a trip into Sweden, the great aim of which was a visit to the novelist, Almqvist. He entered Stockholm just in time to hear that this illustrious person, perhaps the first intellect which Sweden then possessed, had just taken flight for America under a charge of forgery and suspicion of murder. This startling catastrophe caused Runeberg a lively

disappointment, which the Swedish Academy and its spokesman, Baron Beskow, did their best to remove by the cordiality of their welcome. Both in the capital and in Upsala he enjoyed the honours of a notable lion. At Upsala however, he was thrown into the deepest melancholy by the constant necessity of answering the speeches made him on public occasions, for he was a very shy and poor speaker. He soon returned to Borgå, never to leave it again, hugging himself with the delight in home which so often marks a man of his type of genius. He was now possessed of a handsome house, which it was his delight to fill with objects of art, for he posed as the first connoisseur in Finland. When he had originally settled in Borgå he had rented a very small and humble house in the outskirts of the town; and towards the end of his life he was fond of repeating a story which showed that this prophet at least was not without honour in his own country. For, walking in the lonely streets one moonlight night, he was struck with a desire to go and look at this little lodging where he had spent so many of his struggling days. He found it; there was a light in the window, and, peeping through the shutters, he saw an artisan busy over his work, and singing. He listened attentively; it was one of Runeberg's own songs, and the poet turned away with tears of pleasure in his eyes. From this time forward his life was extremely uneventful. In 1853 he collected his prose writings, and published them under the title of 'Smärre Berättelser.' In 1857, as president of the committee to select a National Psalter, he published a 'Psalm-book for the use of Evangelico-Lutheran Congregations in Finland,' to which he contributed sixty-two psalms of his own com-

position. A second series of 'Ensign Stål's Tales' appeared in 1860, and he closed his long literary career with the production of two dramatic works,—'Kan ej' ('Can't'), a comedy in rhyme, performed and published in 1862; and 'Kungarne på Salamis' ('The Kings at Salamis,') a tragedy in the manner of Sophocles. This last is one of his noblest works, combining the Attic severity with the modern poet's realism and truth of detail. It resembles our own English dramas of 'Atalanta in Calydon' and 'Philoctetes' more closely than what the continental poets usually give us as revivals of the antique tragedy. The metre in which it is written is closely modelled on what the Swedish poet has conceived to be the tragic measure of the Greeks, the Sophoclean trimeter.

When, in 1870, Professor Nyblom, in editing the works of Runeberg, issued a biographical notice which still remains the chief storehouse of information, the poet was already in very weak and precarious health. As late, however, as April 1877, he was well enough to publicly congratulate his old friend and fellow-poet Cygnæus on attaining his seventieth birthday. But he was taken ill very shortly after, and on the afternoon of Sunday, May 6, 1877, he passed away in his seventy-fourth year. He has left many disciples behind him, and in his friend and follower, Topelius, Sweden once more borrows from Finland her most prominent living poet. The influence of Runeberg on the literature of his timeh as been healthy and vigorous. In Talis Qualis, who survived him only a few weeks, he found in Sweden itself a quick and strong imagination lighted at the lamp of his own. The present King of Sweden, Oscar II., in his excellent poem of 'Svenska

flottans minnen,' has shown himself a scholar of the great Finnish realist. In Carl Snoilsky, the latest product of Swedish poetry, we find another side of Runeberg's genius, the artistic and classic, laid under the contribution of discipleship, although the main current of this last writer's lyrical work flows in a more modern and a more intense channel, and proves him the more direct disciple of the great Danish lyrist, Christian Winther. We know as yet little of Runeberg's life, little of the inward development of his great powers. A collection of his posthumous writings, as well as an exhaustive biography, will be welcomed by every lover of his noble verse.

THE DANISH NATIONAL THEATRE.

THE only instance in which unfamiliar forms of culture have a claim on public attention is when they are wholly original and individual. The development of the ages is now too vast for men to spare much time in the study of what is merely imitative, and even reproductions of ancient phases of art and literature must now be very excellent or very vigorous, to succeed in arresting general interest. But art is no respecter of persons, and merit in nations, as in individuals, is still not measured by wealth or size; and it sometimes happens even in these days that what is most worthy of attention is to be discovered in narrow and impoverished circles of men, the light of genius burning all the clearer for the atmospheric compression in which it is forced to exist. Of modern peoples none has displayed the truth of this fact more notably than Denmark, a country so weak and poor, so isolated among inimical races, so forlorn of all geographical protection, that its very place among nations seems to have been preserved by a series of accidents, and which yet has been able, by the brilliance of the individual men of genius it has produced, to keep its distinct and honourable place in the world of science and letters during a century and a half of perilous struggle for

existence. There is not another of the minor countries of Europe, that can point to names so universally illustrious in their different spheres as Örsted, Thorwaldsen, Oehlenschläger, Madvig, H. C. Andersen. The labours of these men, by nature of their craft, speak to all cultivated persons; the electro-magnetic discoveries of Örsted tinge all modern habits of life; the fairy-stories of Andersen make an enchanted land of every well-conducted nursery. These men have scarcely influenced thought in their own land more strongly than they have the thought of Europe. But I purpose here to speak a little of a form of culture which has penetrated no less deeply into the spiritual life of Denmark, and which by its very nature is restricted in its workings to the native intelligence.

Of all the small nations of Europe, Denmark is the only one that has succeeded in founding and preserving a truly national dramatic art. One has but to compare it in this respect with the surrounding lands of a cognate character, with Sweden, Norway, Holland, to perceive at once the complete difference of individuality. In all these countries one finds, to be sure, what is called a Royal Theatre, but on examining the *répertoire* one is sure at once to find the bulk of acting plays to be translations or adaptations. If the popular taste is sentimental, the tendency will be towards Iffland and Kotzebue, tempered with a judicious selection from Shakspeare and Schiller; if farcical, perhaps native talent will be allowed to compete with adaptations from Scribe, while the gaps will be filled up with vaudevilles and operettas translated from the French, and set on the stage purely to give employment to the gregarious multitude that sing tolerably and act most intolerably. In such

a depressing atmosphere as this the stage can hardly be said to exist; what poetical talent the nation possesses pours itself into other channels, and sometimes a theatre is found stranded in a position of such hopeless incompetence, that it is ready to adopt the masterpieces of the contemporary English drama.

But the old dingy theatre that was pulled down in Copenhagen in 1874 had another tale to tell than such a dreary one. For within its walls almost all that is really national and individual in the poetic literature of the country had found at one time or another its place and voice. Within the walls that now no more will ever display their faded roses and smoky garlands to the searching flare of the footlights, almost every Danish poet of eminence —with the exception of Grundtvig and Winther, perhaps every one—had received the plaudits of the people, and been taken personally into the sympathy of the nation in a way no mere study-writer ever can be taken. Perhaps this is why the Danes preserve such an astonishing personal love for their dead poets. Men who had seen the white, sick face of Ewald grow whiter under the storms of applause, and the long thin fingers press the aching brow in an agony of nervous agitation; the next generation that saw Oehlenschläger, handsome and burly, in his stall, receive the plaudits like a comfortable burgess, one of themselves; the younger men that knew the haughty, keen face of Heiberg, master of all the best æsthetic culture that his age could give, yet a Dane in every feature, and a type to every romantic youth of what a Dane should be—these men had a sense of being a living part and parcel of the national poetic life such as no citizens have had save at Athens, and Florence,

and Weimar; and their sympathy has been so far wider than these, that it was not the emotion of a single circle, however brilliant, of a single city, however potent, but of a whole nation not potent or brilliant at all, but beating to the heart's core with that warm blood of patriotism that has sent its men, again and again, to certain, hopeless death with cheerful resignation. It is this living force in the dramatic art of Denmark that makes it worthy of study. No lyric or scenic excellence in native writers, no glittering and costly ornament, could have secured to the Royal Theatre of Copenhagen the wonderful influence that it has had over public life, if it had not in some way been able to stand as the representative of the best national life of the country. It is this that gives it a unique place in the history of the modern drama. In Copenhagen the stage has been, what it has not for centuries been in London, the organ by which poetry of the highest class speaks to the masses. The nearest parallel to the position of the Danish Theatre is found amongst ourselves in the new-born popularity of concerts of classical music. Just as crowds throng to hear the elaborate and delicate harmonies of Beethoven and Schumann, till one is set wondering how much of this is habit and fashion, and how much appreciation of the noblest art, so in Copenhagen is one astonished and puzzled to see crowded audiences, night after night, receive with applause dramatic poems that take a place among the most exquisite and subtle works in the language.

Nor is the position of the theatre as a means of widely popularising the higher culture the only or the main service it performs; it is a school for patriotism. Here the people hear their native tongue spoken most purely and most

beautifully, and the peculiar character of the ablest plays on the boards gives the audience an opportunity of almost breathing a condensed air of love for the Fatherland. The best Danish comedies, the old-fashioned but still popular pieces of Holberg, deal almost wholly with life in Copenhagen; and after the lapse of one hundred and fifty years, the satire in them which lashes an affectation of German taste and German fashion is as welcome and as fresh as ever; the most popular tragedies are those of Oehlenschläger, almost without exception occupied with the mythic or the heroic life of early Scandinavia; the later dramas of Heiberg mingle poetic romance with life out in the woods and by the lakes of Zealand; while the farces of Hostrup never stray outside the walls of Copenhagen, but point out to a keenly-appreciative audience the ludicrous side of the men and women that jostle them hourly in the familiar, homely streets. In a community so small that almost everybody knows everybody else, a copious literature studded with local illusion becomes as intensely interesting to the populace as the *vers de société* of a witty poet become to his circle of admirers and butts; and when the interest thus awakened is led to concentrate itself on topics of the gravest national importance, art approaches its apotheosis, and nears the fulfilment of its highest aim. In fact, if a foreign power secured Copenhagen and understood the temper of the people, its first act would undoubtedly be to shut for an indefinite period the doors of the Royal Theatre.

The ugly old theatre that has just been pulled down to make room for a splendid successor was a disgrace to Kongens Nytorv, the handsome central square of Copen-

hagen, and its area had long been quite unable to offer comfortable sitting room to the audience. It was well that it should be pulled down and a better house be opened; but in the moment of destruction a thought of gratitude seemed due to the building that had seen so many triumphs of art, so many brilliant poetical successes, and had so large a share in the best life of the country. It was one of the oldest theatres in Europe, having reached the age, most unusual in this class of houses, of one hundred and twenty-six years. In Paris, where dramatic art has so lovingly been studied, and where the passion for scenic representation was so early developed, only two out of the thirty or more theatres now open date from the last century—the Théâtre Français from 1782, and the Théâtre Porte St. Martin from 1781. The latter suffered so severely under the Commune in 1871, that it hardly comes into the category. Here in London almost all the theatres date, in their present position, from later than 1800, although several of the most important occupy the same classical ground as houses that have been destroyed by fire. This greatest enemy of theatres has wonderfully spared the stage at Copenhagen, where the Royal Theatre, built in 1784, contrived to last till our own day, to undergo the more ignominious fate of being pulled stone from stone.

When Eigtved, the architect, finished it in 1748, it was not the eyesore that it had been of late years; it was considered an adornment to that very Kongens Nytorv that lately groaned under its hideousness. But the growth of the audience, the necessity of more machinery and more furniture, at various times obliged the management to throw out frightful fungus-growths, to heave up the roof,

and make all manner of emendations that destroyed the last vestiges of shapeliness. It was the first theatre where the Danish drama found a firm place to settle in; and after doubtful and dangerous sojourns in Grönnegade and other places, this secure habitation was a great step forward. It seated, however, only eight hundred spectators; and although the decorations and machinery were so magnificent that a performance was announced gratis, merely that there might be an opportunity of impressing society with a Mercury on clouds, and Night brought on in an airy chariot drawn by two painted horses, still a modern audience might have grumbled at having to spend an evening, or rather an afternoon—for the performances began at 5 P.M.—in the old building. The stage was lit up by tallow candles, which had to be briskly snuffed by a special attendant; the orchestra could only muster ten pieces, and the wardrobe suffered from a complaint the most terrible for green-rooms—poverty of costumes. The heart and soul of the management was Holberg, that most gifted of all Danes before or since, who more than any other man has succeeded in lifting his country into an honourable place among the nations. If it be true, as has been said, that Goethe created for Germany the rank it holds in the literature of Europe, much more true is it that Denmark owes to Holberg what rank she has succeeded in attaining. This remarkable man played so important a *rôle* in the dramatic life of the early times of which we speak, that a few words seem demanded here on his life and personal character. He was born, like so many other men who have made a name in Denmark, in Norway, in 1684. When he was eighteen he came up to study at the

University of Copenhagen, and, being left almost entirely destitute, was thrown on the resources of his own talents. Wandering all over the north of Europe, he came at last to Oxford, where he lived for two years, studying at the University, and subsisting in the meanwhile by teaching languages and music. After years of extraordinary adventures, including a journey on foot from Brussels to Marseilles, a narrow escape from the Inquisition at Genoa, and a return journey on foot from Rome over the Alps to Amsterdam, he settled in Copenhagen about the year 1716. Already a great part of his historical works were written, and he gave himself now to law and to philology. His name became generally famous in Denmark as that of a brilliant writer on the subjects just mentioned, but no one suspected that a series of comic poems, published under the pseudonym of Hans Mikkelsen, and over which Copenhagen became periodically convulsed with laughter, were produced by the grave Professor of Latin Eloquence. From 1716 to 1722 he successfully preserved his authorship a secret from the world; but when a circle of those friends to whom his humorous genius was known besought him to try to write for the Danish stage comedies that should banish French adaptations from the theatrical *répertoire*, in assenting he took a place before the public as a comic poet which has outshone all his reputation in science and history, bright as that still is. Until then Copenhagen had possessed a German and a French, but no Danish theatre. The first of Holberg's Danish comedies that was produced was the 'Pewterer turned Politician' ('Den politiske Kandestöber'), a piece that recalls somewhat the style of Ben Jonson in the 'Alchemist,' but which for the

rest is so wholly original, so happily constructed in plot, so exquisitely funny in evolution, that it is one of the most remarkable works ever produced in Scandinavia. Had Molière never lived, the genius of Holberg would have proved itself superhuman: but the fact is that the Danish poet, in the course of his travels, had had opportunity to study the French comedian thoroughly, and had adopted the happy notion of satirising affectation and vice in Copenhagen, not in the same but in a parallel way with that adopted by Molière in lashing Parisian society. In consequence, the series of Holberg's dramas display no imitation, but a general similarity of method, while the precise nature of the wit is characteristic only of himself. These comedies so far belong to the school represented among ourselves by Ben Jonson, and in our own day by Dickens, that the source of amusement is not found in intrigue, nor mainly in the development of the plot, but in the art of bringing prominently forward certain oddities of character, which in the Shakspearian time were called 'humours.' Holberg's loving study of the French drama preserved him from the temptation of exaggerating these studies of eccentric character into caricature; the odd lines are just deepened a little beyond what nature commonly presents, and that is all. These comedies show no signs of losing their freshness. They are as popular on the stage to-day as they were one hundred and fifty years ago, and compared with those English plays that just preceded them, from Wycherley to Colley Cibber, they appear astonishingly modern, and as superior in wit as they are in morality and decency; whereas Holberg's humorous epics and lyrics have long ago gone the way of most such writing, and are

honourably unread in every gentleman's library. The thirty Holbergian comedies formed the nucleus of the Danish drama. It was in 1722, before the actors had found a home in Kongens Nytorv, that the 'Pewterer turned Politician' was produced, and the rest followed in quick succession. Some remarks in one of them against the German tendencies of the ministry then in power had the effect of bringing upon Holberg the displeasure of men in authority; an attempt was made to burn the play publicly, together with another peccant book of Holberg's, the comic epic of 'Peder Paars,' and to punish the author. Fortunately, King Frederick IV. took the poet's part, and this incident only served to intensify popular interest in dramatic representations.

When the Royal Company flitted over to Kongens Nytorv in 1748, Holberg was the heart and soul of the new enterprise. The *répertoire* consisted almost entirely of his own comedies, and of translations of the best pieces of Molière. He was fortunate enough to secure in Clementin and Londemann two interpreters whose traditions still cling about the stage, and whose genius, if we may trust the reports of contemporary writers, was in the highest degree suited to set the creations of the great humourist in the broadest and wittiest manner before an audience that had to be educated into appreciation. The memory of these two men is so far interesting to us, as there seems no doubt that it is to them and to their great master that we owe the chaste and judicious style in acting which still characterises the Danish stage. A stranger from London, or Berlin, we will not say from Paris, is struck in Copenhagen by the wonderful reserve and poetical

repose that characterises the general tone of the acting; no one is permitted to rave and saw the air; it is preferred to lose a little in sensation, if thereby something can be gained in completeness. The great merit now-a-days of Danish acting is not the supreme excellence of a single performance so much as the intelligence of the whole company, and the happy way in which all the important parts are individually made to build up the general harmony of effect. This chastity of art has come down as a tradition from Clementin and Londemann, and for this, if for nothing else, they deserve a moment's recollection.

In 1771, the Royal Theatre entered upon a fresh and fortunate epoch. It became a pensioner of Government, and at the same time received its first important enlargement. This crisis was simultaneous with two events of literary importance. One was the production of the lyrical dramas of Johannes Ewald, the poet who composed the well-known national hymn,

King Christian stood by the high mast,

and who composed, lying on his back in bed, dying, like Heine, by inches, some of the masterpieces of Danish dramatic literature; and the other was the production of a single play so unique in its character that it is worth while to pause a few minutes to discuss it. In the course of fifty years, no poet had risen up whose talents in any way fitted him to carry on the war against affectation that Holberg had fought so bravely and so successfully. The comedies of that author, however, still kept the stage, and the particular forms of folly satirised by them had long

ago died and faded into thin air. But affectation has a thousand hydra-heads, and if a Hercules annihilate one, there are nine hundred and ninety-nine left. The craving after German support and German fashion was indeed dead in 1772, but another fearful craving had taken its place, a yearning after the stilted and beperiwigged chivalry that passed for good manners and good taste in France, or rather on the French heroic stage. To act in real life like the heroes of the tragedies of Voltaire was the universal bourgeois ideal in Copenhagen, and to write as much as possible in alexandrines the apex of good taste. Zaire was the model for a romantic Danish lady. This rococo taste had penetrated to the theatre, where the nobility and the court had introduced it after the death of Holberg. Voltaire had been translated and imitated with great popular success; and when the Royal Theatre was opened anew after its enlargement, a native tragedy by the court poet, Nordahl Brun, was performed on the opening night. This production, which out-Alzired 'Alzire,' was the finishing touch given to the exotic absurdity. A young man, who had hitherto been known only as the president of a kind of club of wits, rose up and with one blow slew this rouged and ruffled creature. His name was Wessel, and the weapon he used was a little tragedy called 'Love without Stockings.' The title was quite *en règle*; 'Love without Hope,' 'Love without Fortune,' 'Love without Recompense,' all these are familiar; and why not 'Love without Stockings'? The populace thronged to see this novelty, and Zaire and Zarine and all the other fantastic absurdities faded away in a roar of universal laughter. 'Love without Stockings' is in some

respects unique in literature. The only thing I know that is in any way parallel to it is Lord Buckingham's 'Rehearsal;' and it differs from that inasmuch as that, while the 'Rehearsal' parodies certain individual pieces of Dryden and others, Wessel's play is a parody of a whole class of dramas.[1] 'Love without Stockings'! Cannot one love without possessing stockings? Certainly not, answers Wessel; at all events, not in the age of knee-breeches. And out of this thought he developes a plot wholly in accordance with the arbitrary rules of French tragedy, with the three unities intact, with a hero and his friend, a heroine and her confidante, with a Fate that pursues the lovers, with their struggle against it, their fall and tragic death. And the whole is worked out in the most pathetic alexandrines, and with a pompous, ornate diction. At the same time, while he adheres strictly to the rules of French tragedy, he does so in such a manner as to make these rules in the highest degree ridiculous, and to set the faults of this kind of writing in the very plainest light. The wedding-day of the two lovers has arrived; all is ready, the priest is waiting, the bride is adorned, but alas! the bridegroom, who is a tailor, has no stockings, or, at all events, no white ones. What can he do? Buy a pair? But he has no money. Borrow a pair of his bride? On the one hand, it would not be proper; on the other, his legs are too thin. But his rival is rich, is the possessor of many pairs of white stockings; the lover fights a hard battle, or makes out that he does, between virtue and love—but love

[1] Perhaps the closest English analogue is Henry Carey's *Dragon of Wantley*, the fun of which was so potent against the Italian opera in 1738.

prevails, and he steals a pair. Adorned in them he marches off to the church with his bride, but on the way the larceny is discovered, and the rival holds him up to public disgrace. For one moment the hero is dejected, and then, recalling his heroic nature, he rises to the height of the situation and stabs himself with a pocket-knife. The bride follows his example, then the rival, then the confidante, then the friend; and the curtain goes down on a scene in the approved tragic manner. The purity of the language, and the exactitude with which not only the French dramas, but the Italian arias then so much in vogue, were imitated, secured an instant success for this parody, which took a place that it has ever since retained among the classics of its country. The French tragedy fell; an attempt to put Nordahl Brun's 'Zarine' on the boards again was a signal failure, and the painted Muse fled back to her own Gallic home. The wonderful promise of 'Love without Stockings' was scarcely fulfilled. Wessel wrote nothing more of any great importance, and in a few years both he and Ewald were dead. The death-blow, however, that the first had given to pompous affectation, and the stimulus lent by the second to exalted dramatic writing, brought forward several minor writers, whose very respectable works have scarcely survived them, but who helped to set Danish literature upon a broad and firm basis. The theatre in Kongens Nytorv took a new lease of vitality, and, after expelling the French plays, set itself to turn out a worse cuckoo-fledgling that had made itself a nest there—the Italian Opera. This institution, with all its disagreeable old traditions, with its gang of castrati and all its attendant aliens, pressed hard upon the

comfort and welfare of native art, and it was determined to have done with it. The Italians were suddenly sent about their business, and with shrill screams brought news of their discomfiture to Dresden and Cologne. Then for the first time the Royal Theatre found space to breathe, and since then no piece has been performed within its walls in any other language than Danish. When the present writer heard Gluck's opera of 'Iphigenia in Tauris' sung there some years ago with infinite delicacy and finish, it did not seem to him that any charm was lost through the fact that the libretto was in a language intelligible to all the hearers. To supply the place of the banished Opera, the Danes set about producing lyrical dramas of their own. In the old Hartmann, grandfather to the now living composer of that name, a musician was found whose settings of Ewald have had a truly national importance. The airs from these operas of a hundred years ago live still in the memory of every boy who whistles. From this moment the Royal Theatre passed out of its boyhood into a confident manhood, or at least into an adolescence which lasted without further crisis till 1805.

It was in that year that the young and unknown poet, Adam Oehlenschläger, wearing out a winter in Germany under all the worst pangs of nostalgia, found in the University Library at Halle a copy of the Icelandic of Snorre Sturleson's 'Heimskringla.' The event was as full of import to Scandinavian literature as Luther's famous discovery of the Bible was to German liberty. In Oehlenschläger's own words, he read the forgotten classic as one reads a packet of new-found letters from the dearest friend

of one's youth; and when he reached 'Hakon Jarl's Saga' in his reading, he laid the folio aside, and in a kind of ecstasy sat down to write a tragedy on that subject, which was the firstfruits of a new epoch, and destined to revolutionise poetic literature, not in Denmark only, but throughout the North. To follow the development of Oehlenschläger's genius would take us too far from our present inquiry, and belongs rather to the history of poetry proper than to that of the Danish theatre. It suffices to point out that the real addition to national dramatic art given by these tragedies was that the whole subject-matter of them was taken from the legendary history of the race. Instead of borrowing themes from Italian romance or German tradition, this poet took his audience back to the springs of their own thought and legend; in the sagas of Iceland he found an infinite store of material for tragic dramas in which to develop emotions kindred to the people in whose language they were clothed, and to teach the unfailing lesson of patriotism to a nation that had almost forgotten its own mediæval glories. In place of the precious sticklers for the unities, Oehlenschläger set before his eyes Shakespeare for a model; but his worship was less blind than that of the German romanticists, and did not lead him into extravagances so wild as theirs. In later years, when he passed from the influence of Goethe, he fell into a looser and more florid style; but in his earlier dramas he is, perhaps, the coldest and most severe playwright that has ever succeeded in winning the popular ear.[1] So intent

[1] There can be no question that the early decadence of Oehlenschläger's genius was mainly due to the absurd excess of laudation showered upon him in Denmark. He rose again, for one moment, in 1842, to the height of his power, in the tragedy of 'Dina.'

was he on insisting on the heroic, primal forms of life, so careless of what was merely sentiment and adornment, that he presents in one of his most famous tragedies, 'Palnatoke,' the unique spectacle of a long drama, in which no female character is introduced. It was not intentionally so; simply Oehlenschläger forgot to bring a woman into his plot. He rewarded the patience of the public by dedicating his next play, 'Axel and Valborg,' entirely to romantic love. The success of this piece on the stage was so great, that, as the poet was away from Copenhagen and wished the printing to be delayed, large sums were given for MS. copies, and a clerk busied himself day after day in writing out the verses for enthusiastic playgoers. As it was seventy years ago with fashionable people, so is it to this day with every boy and maiden. The fame of Oehlenschläger, like that of Walter Scott amongst ourselves, has broadened and deepened, even while it has somewhat passed out of the recognition of the cultivated classes. It is usual now-a-days, in good society, to vote Oehlenschläger a trifle old-fashioned; but for every thoughtful boy his tragedies are the very basis upon which his first ideas of culture are built up; they are to him the sum and crown of poetry, while all other verses seem but offshoots and imitations; they are to him what bread is among the necessaries of life. He measures the other poets that he learns to know, by Oehlenschläger, but there is no one by whom he dreams of measuring him; he looks at him as the sun of their planet-circle, and he knows nothing yet of any other solar system. Just as these tragedies are the foundation of a Dane's education, so for the Danish stage they have always been, and will remain, the foundation of everything that the theatre

can offer of serious drama, the very cornerstone of the whole edifice: and, rightly enough, an ambitious actor's first desire is to fit himself for the performance of the heroic parts in these, the manner and style being already traditional. The strings that Oehlenschläger touched had never before been heard in Denmark; he led his audience into a world of thought and vision where its feet had never stood before, and he spoke in a language that had never yet been declaimed from behind the footlights. It was not, therefore, wonderful that some years went by before a school of actors arose whose powers were adequate to the burden of these new dramas, and who could be the poèt's worthy interpreters. Without such interpreters the tragedies of Oehlenschläger might have passed from the stage into the library, and their great public function never have been fulfilled. But as early as 1813, in Ryge, a man of superb histrionic genius, an actor was found wholly worthy to bear the weight of such heroic parts as Hakon Jarl and Palnatoke; some years afterwards Nielsen and his celebrated wife began to share this glory, and the palmy days of Danish acting set in. Fru Nielsen was the Mrs. Siddons of the Danish stage; in her highly-strung sensibility, native magnificence of manner, and passionate grace, she was exactly suited to give the correct interpretation to Oehlenschläger's queenly but rather cold heroines.

The next event in the Royal Theatre was the introduction of Shakspeare, but unfortunately he did not arrive alone. The newly-awakened sense for what was lofty and pathetic sought for itself satisfaction in the dreadful dramas of the German 'Sturm und Drang Periode,' and threatened to lose its reason completely in the rant-

and bluster of melodrama. Again the popular sanity was rescued from its perils. We have seen the Danish drama created by the comedies of Holberg, and then fall into the snare of pseudo-classic tragedy; we have seen it saved from this wrinkled and mincing foe by a single scathing parody, and then fall gradually into a condition of tameness and triviality. Out of this we have seen it suddenly lifted into the zenith of the poetical heavens by the genius of Oehlenschläger; and now we find it tottering dizzily, and ready to fall into some humiliating abyss. It does not fall, but is carried lightly down into the atmosphere of common life on the wings of a mild and homely muse. Hitherto the stage had been forced to adapt itself to the poet's caprices; it found in 1825 a poet who would mould himself to its needs and exigencies. Heiberg understood how to bring all forms of scenic individuality into his service; for the descendants of Holberg he provided laughter, for the interpreters of Oehlenschläger parts that displayed the mild enthusiam of Scandinavian romanticism. Above all he possessed the art of setting an audience in good humour at the outset; his most serious dramas had some easy-going prologue, in which good, honest Copenhageners found themselves lightly laughed at, and their own darling haunts and habits portrayed with a humour that was wholly sympathetic. And, having at his hand more than one young composer of enthusiasm and talent, and being from the first a passionate admirer of the Swedish airs of Bellman, he brought music and dancing into his plays in a way that the audience found ravishing, and that filled the house as it had never been filled before. His success combined with it that of his intimate friend, Hertz, whose southern imagination and passion

flowed out in plays that brought an element of richness and colour into Danish dramatic art that had always been lacking before. Heiberg's wife became the first actress of her time; and these three friends contrived for a long succession of years to hold the reins in all matters regarding the theatre, and in measure, also, to govern public taste in general questions of art and literature. The two poets are both dead; Fru Heiberg still lives in honoured age, the centre still of a keenly critical circle. The influence of Heiberg and Hertz on popular feeling in Denmark has been extraordinary; in a larger country it could not have been so powerful, being, as it was, almost wholly critical and of a peculiarly delicate type. The average cultivated Dane now-a-days is very much what Heiberg has made him; that is, one of the most refined, fastidious, and superficially cultivated men of his class in Europe, but wholly incapable of creating new forms of art, and so perfectly satisfied with its past that he has no curiosity for its future. The only new class of drama produced in Denmark in our own time is the farces of Hostrup, pieces that belong to the 'cup and saucer' school, and are very much what Robertson would have written, if Robertson had happened to be born a poet. Let us hope that the new house will bring forward new writers, and that the period of lethargy and reaction after the last outburst of poetry is nearly over.

An account of the Danish Royal Theatre would be very imperfect without some notice of a form of art which borrows no aid directly from poetry, but which has developed itself in a quite unique manner at Copenhagen. Already in the middle of the last century, under the direction of Galeotti, the ballet was made a prominent

feature on the boards of the Royal Theatre; and from the records of that time we learn that it already began to be regarded with a seriousness that has hardly been afforded to it elsewhere. However, it was not until about fifty years ago that it took the peculiar form which it now holds, and which gives it a national importance. If one can fancy an old Greek in whose brain the harmonious dances of a divine festival still throbbed, waking suddenly to find himself settled in this commonplace century as dancing-master at the Royal Theatre of Copenhagen, one can form some notion of the personality of Bournonville. This poet, to whom the gift of words seems to have been denied, has retained instead the most divine faculty for devising intricate and exquisite dances, and for framing stories of a dramatic kind, in which all the action is performed in dumb show, and consists of a succession of mingled tableaux and dances. These dumb poems—in the severely intellectual character of which the light and trivial pettiness of what all the rest of Europe calls a ballet is forgotten—are mostly occupied with scenes from the mythology and ancient history of Scandinavia, or else reflect the classicism of Thorwaldsen, with whose spirit Bournonville is deeply imbued. No visitor to Copenhagen should miss the opportunity of seeing one of these beautiful pieces, the best of all, perhaps, being 'Thrymskviden' (the 'Lay of Thrym,' a giant king), to which Hartmann has set the wildest, most magical music conceivable. Certain scenes in this ballet remain on the mind as visions of an almost ideal loveliness. The piece is occupied with the last days of the Æsir, the gods of heathen Scandinavia, against whom it will be remembered, be-

trayed by Loki, the Evil God, one of themselves, the powers of darkness and chaos rose, and who sank to destruction in the midst of a general conflagration of the universe. When once the natural disappointment that follows the discovery of these colossal figures of the imagination dwarfed to human proportions has subsided, the vigour and liveliness of the scenes, the truly poetic conceptions, the grace and originality of the dances, surprise and delight one to the highest degree; and the vivid way in which the dumb poem is made to interpret its own development is worthy of particular attention, the insipidity of ordinary ballet-plots giving all the more piquancy to the interest of this.

It cannot be wholly without value to us to be made aware of the success of other nations in fields where we have been notoriously unsuccessful ourselves. Without falling into any of the jeremiads that have only been too plentiful of late years, we may soberly confess that our own theatres have long ceased to be a school for poetic education, or influential in any way as leaders of popular thought or taste. They have not attempted to claim any moral or political power; they have existed for amusement only, and now, in the eyes of most cultivated persons, they have ceased even to amuse. Over the drop-scene at the Royal Theatre at Copenhagen there stands in large gold letters this inscription: 'Ej blot til Lyst'—*not merely for enjoyment*: and in these simple words may be read the secret of its unique charm and the source of its power. It has striven, not prudishly or didactically, but in a broad and healthy spirit, to lead the popular thought in high and ennobling directions. It

has not stooped to ask the lowest of its auditors how near the edges of impropriety, how deep into the garbage of vulgarity and slang, how high in the light air of triviality it dared to go; it has not interpreted comedy by farce, not turned tragedy into melodrama, nor dirtied its fingers with burlesque, but has adapted itself as far as possible, meekly and modestly, to the requirements of the chastity of art, and has managed for a century and a half to support a school of original actors and a series of national plays without borrowing traditions or dramas from its neighbours. Denmark is an extremely insignificant country; but that exemplary insect, the ant, is also small, and yet the wisest of men deigned to recommend it to human attention.

FOUR DANISH POETS.

THE revival of romantic poetry in Denmark was almost exactly coeval with the movement of Wordsworth and Coleridge amongst ourselves, and in each case the introduction of a somewhat poor and inartistic element from Germany was the immediate cause of the development of a rare, vigorous, and many-sided poetic art. In Denmark, two Scandinavian exiles brought romanticism back with them on their return; of these one was a philosopher, Henrik Steffens, the other was a poet, Schack-Staffeldt. These persons did for their country not only what Coleridge did for England, but what he proposed to do. In theory and practice, by stirring lectures and by exquisite lyrics, they pointed their countrymen to the value of abstract and mystic thought, and in the same dreamy spirit to the popular legends and ancient mythology of their country. Steffens indeed was met by public disapproval, but in private discussion he lit the ambition of Oehlenschläger and Grundtvig, and a new epoch commenced. To chronicle the bare facts of the fertile and brilliant period that ensued, merely to enumerate works of all the romantic poets from Schack-Staffeldt to Paludan-Müller, would need more than one volume. The efflorescence of Danish poetry lasted about half a century,

from 1800 to 1850, and in this short space of time the valuable part of the literature of Denmark was trebled in bulk. I have thought it might be of some interest, and not unsuited to the limited space at my command, if I gave a rapid sketch of the characteristics of four deceased poets, widely divergent from one another, each of the highest eminence in his own line, and with each of whom it has been my privilege to come into some measure of personal intercourse. These four were the last[1] survivors of a race of intellectual giants, the tradition of whose prestige will long give Denmark an honourable prominence among the nations of Northern Europe.

I.

It was on the last Sunday of July 1872 that I set out to hear Bishop Grundtvig preach in the little workhouse chapel, called the Vartou, opposite the trees and still waters of the western ramparts of Copenhagen. I had much desired for some time past to satisfy the curiosity I felt to see the oldest poet, certainly, then alive in Europe, but my friends were of the orthodox party in the Church, and some little difficulty was made. However, the amiability of my host overcame his scruples as a rival theologian, and we set out together. We found seats with difficulty, for the chapel was crowded with communicants, the day being of special importance among the sect. After sitting more than half-an-hour, surrounded by strange fanatic faces, and women who swung themselves to and

[1] I do not forget Christian Winther, but regard him as the first of a new school, rather than as the last of the old.

fro in silent prayer, it seemed to be decided that the Bishop was unable to come, and we began to sing hymns in the loud, quick, joyous manner invented by the poet, and very different from the slow singing in the state churches. Suddenly, and when we had given up all hope, there entered from the vestry and walked rapidly to the altar a personage who seemed to me the oldest man I had ever seen. He prayed in a few words that sounded as if they came from underground, and then he turned and exhorted the communicants in the same slow, dull voice. He stood beside me for a moment as he laid his hands on a girl's head, and I saw his face to perfection. For a man of ninety, he could not be called infirm, but the attention was drawn less to his vitality, great as it was, than to his appearance of excessive age. He looked like a troll from some cave in Norway; he might have been centuries old.

From the vast orb of his bald head, very long silky hair, perfectly white, fell over his shoulders, and mingled with a long and loose white beard. His eyes flamed under very beetling brows, and they were the only part of his face that seemed alive, even when he spoke. His features were still shapely, but colourless and dry, like parchment. I never saw so strange a head. When he rose into the pulpit, and began to preach, and in his dead voice warned us all to beware of false spirits, and to try every spirit, he looked very noble, but the nobility was scarcely Christian. In the body of the church he had reminded me of a troll; in the pulpit he looked more like some forgotten Druid, that had survived from Mona and could not die. It is rare indeed to hear any man

preach a sermon at ninety, and perhaps unique for that man to be also a great poet. Had I missed seeing him then, I should never have seen him; for he took to his bed next day, and in a month the grand old man was dead.

Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig was born in 1783, at the parsonage of Udby, in the south of Zealand. All his relatives were Zealand folk; both on the father's and mother's side the family had been Danes of the most Danish intensity for long generations. Perhaps this has had something to do with his great love of all that is national and homely; of all the Northern writers, not one has so exclusively been a man of the people. When he was only nine years old he was sent away to school in Jutland, and while he was here the news came of the execution of Louis XVI. The poet was wont to declare that he could remember it; doubtless the great events in France were the subject of much excited talk in the tutor's house at Tyregodlund. When he was fifteen he was sent to the Latin school at Aarhuus, but long before this his mind had begun to take in literary impressions. On the wild moors of Jutland, he had learned to steal out alone with old chronicles and war-songs under his arm, and devour strange romances. At Aarhuus he made friends with a little old shoemaker, and, sitting by his fireside through the long winter nights, heard folk-song after folk-song, and story after story. In 1800 he became a student at the University of Copenhagen, and began to study Icelandic. About 1803 he came under the influence of his cousin, Henrik Steffens, then a very prominent man just returned from Germany full of Fichte and Schelling, and whose

lectures on the poetic treatment of themes of popular history were a revelation to the young men of the day. The works of Steffens are almost forgotten now-a-days, but in the earliest years of the century he was a power in the North of Europe, more by the almost magnetic attraction of his personal presence than by any great depth or value in his words.

In a pretty country-house, in the island of Langeland, where he was tutor, Grundtvig now began to throw himself heart and soul into literature. He studied Icelandic, that he might make himself master of the ancient sagas; German, that he might revel in Goethe and Tieck; and English, that he might stand face to face with Shakspeare. But what roused the young Titan more than all was the publication of Oehlenschläger's first volume of poems, which came to him in his solitude in Langeland, and fired him with a new ambition. Henceforth he was a poet, but his first two works, though published under the patronage of Rahbek, the Mæcenas of Danish letters, fell dead from the press. But he had many strings to his bow. In 1807 he published 'On Religion and Liturgy,' in which he stepped forward as a spiritual reformer, urging the necessity of a broader spirit in religious matters. The daring tone of the book drew people's attention to its author. In 1808 he appeared before the public in yet another guise, as author of 'The Mythology of the North,' a first attempt at a philosophico-poetical interpretation of the Scandinavian myths, and this was followed by a long epic poem of similar drift, 'The Decline of Heroic Life in the North.' Literary work was carried by him to such an excess that in 1810 his nervous system gave way, and the young poet

had to go home to his father's house to be nursed. Here he wrote 'A Short Sketch of the World's Chronicle,' a fanatical and violent work, which roused a good deal of ill-feeling against him. In 1813 his father died, and he came to live in Copenhagen. There his literary ambitions blossomed out in the most fervid manner. The seven years of his stay in the city are filled with the record of ceaseless labour; he published in that period a great mass of poetical, theological, and philosophical works, edited and wrote a newspaper, and translated into the best Danish, Snorro Sturleson, Saxo-Grammaticus, and Beowulf. In 1821 he came with his newly-wedded wife to live at Præstö, a little country town in Zealand, of which he had been made pastor; but the provincial life proved unbearable, and in a few months he flitted back to the capital.

Hitherto his life had been one of constant and well-merited success, but now a hand was interposed to stop the onward course of victory. It must be confessed that his own unwisdom drew it on him. In the University of Copenhagen a Dr. Clausen was Professor of Theology; Grundtvig, who had long passed beyond the romantic theology of Steffens, considered Clausen too much addicted to rationalistic ideas, and openly, even violently, charged him with heresy. The result was a law-suit for libel, and Clausen was successful. Grundtvig was heavily fined, and placed under ecclesiastical censure, a ban which was not removed for sixteen years. He retired from publicity in consequence, and lived as a private man of letters; the languages and popular literature of the peoples of the North continued to be his constant study. He interested himself in Anglo-

Saxon, and, that he might explore all the streams of that language at their fountain-head, he paid four successive visits to England. In 1842, especially, when the Tractarian movement at Oxford was beginning to work so powerfully in the English Church, Grundtvig, who had watched the battle from afar, came over to us again, that he might study on the spot the various currents of excited religious opinion then dividing English society. All this while he was not entirely without public influence in theological matters; soon after his disgrace, he sought and at last obtained permission to preach in a single church in Copenhagen, where he, Sunday by Sunday, declaimed and exhorted in his peculiar manner to a select audience of disciples. At first his influence was very small, but his pupils, if few, were extremely enthusiastic, and his doctrines have so far spread as to have formed a sect who glory in the name of Grundtvigians, and who comprise within their numbers a large proportion of the inhabitants of Denmark and Norway, and not a few in Sweden. In his later years he has spent much labour in advocating a new scheme of education for the peasants, by means of what are called Popular High Schools. These schools are carried on under Grundtvigian principles,—that is, everything the old poet has counselled is carried out on an extravagant scale—for he remarked, it is said, that he never was a 'Grundtvigian' himself, and never sanctioned half the follies that are perpetrated in his name. These High Schools are now found all over Denmark and Norway. The peasants meet together, men and women, in the winter nights, and are taught to read and write, if that is needful but chiefly receive oral instruction in the

elements of singing, and above all, study the history of their country in Grundtvig's rhythmical chronicles and songs. In Denmark the schools are extremely popular, and the spirit of hatred towards the 'German tyrant' is strongly fostered in them, for every Grundtvigian is, above all things, intensely a Dane.

In religious matters Grundtvig never divided himself distinctly from the Danish Church; to the last he remained within the pale of it. But at the very time that he was confuting the neologism of Professor Clausen he was developing views at variance with Danish orthodoxy. He opposed the usual view of the inspiration of the Bible with great subtlety, and with evident sincerity, though his views were neither entirely logical nor entirely original. He first made public his convictions at the very time when an extremely interesting work of an analogous character was appearing in England, the 'Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit,' by S. T. Coleridge. But while Coleridge conscientiously refers to Lessing as the suggester of his ideas, Grundtvig was under the impression that his own were entirely new. The formula upon which all that is peculiar in his teaching rests, is that 'the Church of Christ is founded on a word, and not on a book;' and so, without in any way rejecting the Bible, he considers it secondary to the Creed, and would fain trace this last to the actual oracular word of Jesus. If this theory be vague, it is at the same time quite undeniable that Grundtvig has brought about a great and salutary revival in the practical character of the Danish Church. He has introduced animated and popular preaching, hearty singing and frequent communions, with a new

and excellent hymn-book for general use, in which he has superseded the tiresome and conventional pieces of the last century in favour of the stirring and national hymns of such ancient poets as Kingo and Brorson. At the same time, the most sober-minded theologians looked askance at Grundtvig's doctrinal laxities. He was an old Pagan at heart, after all, a viking—baptized, indeed, and zealous for the faith, but dim on all crucial questions of dogma. His youth had been wearied by much abstract talk about virtue, and it was the conquering power and wide-spreading enthusiasm, rather than the morality of the gospel, that charmed him. The picturesque and anthropomorphic features of religion delighted him to a dangerous excess, and he was not always very sure if it were Christ or Baldur for whom he fought. The great point was to be always fighting for some pure and personal deity. For the Old Testament he scarcely disguised his indifference. His ardour and his glowing passion made the common people hear him gladly, but grave theologians, such as Dr. Martensen and Dr. Fog, eminent divines whose creed was crystallised in systems of Christian ethics and Christian dogmatics, always held aloof from the rash and emotional schismatic. Grundtvig's title of Bishop was only an honorary one; he never held a diocese.

As a poet, one of the greatest of Scandinavian critics has called Grundtvig 'the younger brother of Oehlenschläger;' but he differed greatly from that eminent man, and indeed from all later Danish poets, in being no artist, but essentially a fighter, a man of action. He never cared to address the polite world of letters; he wrote poems for the

people, and in return there is no poet in our time whose works have been read and loved in the homes of the peasants as his have been. 'Like a bird in the greenwood, I would sing for the country folks, so that my song might pass from mouth to mouth, and give delight from one generation to another. It will be my greatest happiness, as a child-like poet, if I can write songs that will make bare legs skip in the street at the sound of them. That shall be called my best poem, my greatest glory and memorial, which is the greatest favourite in Danish harvest-fields when the girls are binding sheaves. That shall be my crowned and accepted poem which inclines most girls to the dances at every country wedding.' This is, at least, a very intelligible ambition, and a very arduous one. It can hardly be said that Grundtvig has the perfect simplicity and repose that such an aim requires. He is, perhaps, of foreign writers, the one most near to Carlyle in temperament. On all sides of his genius he was a little too destructive; he gloried throughout his long life in opposing himself to conventional forms and conventional aspirations; he even found an exhilaration in the mere act of fighting. He was a dangerous old literary bersark to the last. Slightly altering his own words, we may take them as describing his life's course:—

> This hero followed not the tide;
> He dashed the waves of thought aside,—
> Above his hair their wild spray passed,
> But only silvered it at last.

It was in lyrical composition that he achieved the

greatest triumphs; as a lyrist he will always rank high among the poets of the North, although he lacked the gifts of concentration and compression.

II.

There can never have existed two poets more widely different in genius and disposition than Grundtvig and Bödtcher, who for nearly eighty years lived as fellow-citizens of the same little state. They had almost less in common than Burns and Keats; the first was essentially a man of action, the second as essentially a dreamer and an artist. Ludvig Adolph Bödtcher was born on April 22, 1793, being thus by eight months Shelley's junior. When he was a very little child the young Oehlenschläger came to act in private theatricals with his brothers, and thus in his father's house the boy became acquainted with the new romantic literature. Oehlenschläger became his first master in verse, but he soon learned to express his very plastic and definite genius in his own way. In 1812 he went to the university, and lounged easily through an uneventful student-life in which love and verse outweighed the attractions of deep study. Early in life his innocent epicureanism asserted itself, and when in 1824 his father died, leaving him a small fortune, he did not hesitate an hour, but set off at once to live in Italy. He settled in Rome; his rooms looked on to the Piazza Barberini, and exactly opposite him was Thorwaldsen's studio. For eleven years he received at his window every morning the great sculptor's greeting from the shining street below, and he became in time the

most intimate of all the friends of Thorwaldsen. In his own house he held a little court for Scandinavian poets and painters visiting Rome; and the enjoyable monotony of his life was only broken by little excursions into the mountains or to the Bay of Naples. His favourite spot outside Rome was Nemi, the scenery of which inspired several of his most exquisite verses. The simplicity and idle ease of Rome delighted Bödtcher; he was able to do exactly what he pleased, and in company with Thorwaldsen he associated with an extraordinary group of personages. To the studio came the King of Bavaria, the ex-King of Holland, Dom Miguel of Portugal, and Napoleon's old mother Letitia, while Bödtcher counted among his own visitors not these only, but King Frederick VII. of Denmark, Sir Walter Scott, Cornelius and Horace Vernet. To study so motley a crew of notabilities was the young Danish poet's delight, and he filled up the odd corners of his time by polishing to their last perfection one after another of his own adorable verses, composing with the utmost deliberation and at long intervals.

In 1835 Thorwaldsen died, and it then became apparent that Bödtcher had deserved well of Denmark, for it was only by his constant and untiring effort that the versatile sculptor had been induced to leave his works to his own country. Bödtcher had had to fight the battle step by step with the King of Bavaria, who had made up his mind to secure the sculptures for Munich, and who could not conceal his displeasure when the poet outwitted him at last, by inducing Thorwaldsen to sign the deed of bequest. To accompany the precious freight to Copenhagen, Bödtcher tore himself away from Italy. With

all his late friend's masterpieces around him, he set out from Leghorn with a gay '*a rivederla!*' to the Italian coast, which he was not fated to revisit. For finding himself once again in Copenhagen, his easy indolent nature led him to put off the idea of returning southwards, until his life had taken root again in the North. As, however, he made a little Denmark around him in Rome, so in Copenhagen he contrived to enjoy something still of Italy. With his guitar, his roses, his quaint friends, he lived his own life without constraint, profoundly careless, because unconscious, of the 'fall of sceptres and of crowns.' His philosophy was that of Anacreon, or rather of Omar Khayyam: he never vexed himself about his soul; he lived for enjoyment only, but then he enjoyed not merely the sunshine, and flowers, and choice wines, but still more the conversation of his friends and the diapason of the noble poetry of all time. He was no critic, but his range of poetic pleasures was very wide, and if he had a fault it was foolish indulgence to every needy man of letters who sought his help or his sympathy. To Bödtcher went the poetess who was 'misunderstood' at home, and the antiquarian whose researches a cold world derided. In him at least they always found an auditor. It did not occur to him to publish his own poems until 1856, when he was already an elderly man. They fill one slender volume, which has been augmented since his death by another still more slender.

Ludvig Bödtcher is one of the most finished poets that the North has produced: the entire collection of his works is no larger than the poems of Thomas Gray, but almost every one of them is a gem, cut and engraved with the most

exquisite precision. In metrical construction his lyrics have an extraordinary delicacy and shapeliness; he is the most consummate artist in form among the Danish poets. His most characteristic pieces unite a kind of dry sparkle of humour with the intense light and vivid form of antiquity or of Italian landscape. Among these the longest and finest is 'The Meeting with Bacchus,' a delicious 'piece of Paganism,' as Wordsworth would have called it. The poet leaves the dewy gardens of Frascati in the early morning, and on a stout mule climbs towards Monte Porcia. The rosy radiance of the morning strikes them as they pass the ancient Tusculum, and the smiling poet finds that the mule is smiling too. In this joyous mood they wend on their way, and the poet falls into a dream, in which the lovely modern landscape becomes full of antique life. At last, at the side of an old rock-cistern, he shouts 'Evoë!' and starts to hear a triple echo. Suddenly he perceives at his side the ancient altar of Bacchus, and before him rise a motley group of satyrs.

'And lo! in a quiet reverie beside me, a youth lay stretched upon the marble, with a dreamy smile as if his thoughts rekindled the dark fires of antique art.

'The sandal which bound his foot was delicately fastened; one arm supported his head, the other, with a glass in the hand, lay along the table naked, as though Phidias had carved it.

'Mine eyes sank when that youth turned and gazed on me, for midnight owns no star so sparkling as his eyes were, and yet my looks were chained to their clear fires.'[1]

The youth pours out a cup of wine, and when the poet praises it, says coldly, 'Non c'é male!' 'Not bad, indeed! show me a better,' cries the guest; 'Si, Signore!' replies

[1] Appendix Z.

the youth, and bids him follow. He leads him to a rustic dwelling in the rock, all overgrown with ivy, and leads him down into a cellar. He crushes marvellous red grapes into a beaker, and the poet lifts up his song of praise to Bacchus, while still the youth gravely smiles.

'He lowered the beaker; there came a cascade of fire, a murmur of vine-leaves, and then all the cavern was filled with a perfume of wine, mingled with roses and jasmine.

'I drank, while my eyes gazed intently beyond the glory and the vapour; the first grew like a magian's lamp, the last became a dim veil of pearl, through which all seemed mistier but fairer than before.

'It seemed to me that pillars rose from the floor, and shot out marble shoulders, over which a cupola sprang high into the roof, and that round the alabaster of the walls the ivy swung in festoons.

'But such a mist hung round me! then it cleared, and lo! the wine-casks had disappeared, and seven yellow leopards, still and severe, lay watching me, with folded paws.

'Then, reeling with the vision, I turned to the youth that brought me thither smiling. He rested, majestic, on a thyrsus, and his look was terrible. I fell before him in the dust, and stammered "Dionysos!"'[1]

He wakes to find that he has been dosing in the wood by the road-side, and that his mule stands patiently by him. I cannot hope in this bald sketch to give any idea of the form and beauty of a poem that approaches as near perfection as modern verses can. This is perhaps the finest of Bödtcher's lyrics, though there are several others that in precision and originality,—in the qualities of a cameo or an intaglio, clear form carved in colour,—come very near it.

I had the privilege of being presented to this charming

[1] Appendix AA.

old man and divine poet, during the last year of his life. He was living in Sværtegade, a little street in Copenhagen, where he occupied rooms high up the house, close under the sky. I was introduced by an esteemed friend of his, and the singularly genial and gentle manner of his welcome put me at my ease with him at once. His sitting-room was thoroughly in keeping with his character. It was filled with works of art and memorials of his life in Italy. Behind his arm-chair stood Bissen's bust of the poet when he was a young and handsome man. It could not be said of him at eighty-one that he was otherwise than pleasant-looking, although the loss of one eye was a marked disfigurement. He wore dark spectacles, and a snuff-coloured wig; his figure was tall and spare, his forehead very full at the temples; and his mouth had evidently been large and sensitive, like Keats's. His one bright eye was still of an extraordinary brilliance and vivacity. It was the first year, he explained to me, that he had not been able to get out into the beech-woods on 'Pinsedag' or Whitsunday, a day on which Copenhagen is always deserted, and the forests are filled. It was on Whitsunday that we visited him, and the old gentleman was a little inclined to be mournful about it. But he cheered up as the sun came out and lighted into intense pale green the young leaves of a beech-tree, in a pot which filled the window, flanked by two rose-bushes. 'Ah!' he said, 'the sun through the leaves is as good as a flower to me, and when you are gone, I shall sit for the rest of the day and dream of the woods.' He talked readily of his friendship with Thorwaldsen, and chuckled as he recounted the oft-told tale of how he outwitted the

King of Bavaria. While he talked he sat on a *forhöining*, or raised platform in the window; his restless eye seemed all the while to follow something, and presently I discovered that opposite him an oblique mirror allowed him to watch the life passing in the street below. On the wall behind him hung his guitar; of his carpet he used to say that it was very costly, when you considered how many of the best cigars had to be consumed over it before it got so rich a colour, from the descending smoke; every object in the room had its particular anecdote or association connected with it; each could only have belonged to Bödtcher, and the gentle epicurean seemed not the least precious or the least antique of the objects of art.

His smile was sweet and humorous—such a smile as Charles Lamb might have given a visitor in his happiest and quietest hours. It was on the 25th of May 1874 that I had the pleasure of this welcome; next day I received a little note and the poet's photograph. In July he sent me a kind greeting in a letter from Christian Winther, and on the 1st of October of the same year he died, after one day's illness. To the very last he clung to his old habits, singing his own songs in a feeble broken voice, and playing meanwhile on the guitar. He left behind him the fragrant memory of a long life, in which there was no sadness or baseness, but in which art and an affectionate nature were self-sufficient to the close.

III.

There was no man of genius in Europe so accessible as Hans Christian Andersen. Whether in his own house

in Havnegade, or in the country at Rolighed, where his friends the Melchiors had fitted up rooms for him, he was at the service of any visitor who brought with him the pass-word of enthusiasm and respect. He delighted in publicity, and responded to the sympathy of strangers with the utmost alacrity. I saw him in 1872, and again in 1874, and he did me the honour to write to me frequently between the earlier date and his death. Yet, although he accepted me at once into his intimacy, I cannot pretend that I have anything very characteristic to add to the published memorials of one of the most singular persons of our time. For Andersen throughout his long literary life never scrupled to make the world his confidante, and that with the utmost sincerity; so that his friends could but testify to the minute fidelity of his portrait of himself. It is true that that portrait is not to be found complete in those stories for children, which are chiefly associated with his name in the mind of the English public. We have to read the 'Romance of My Life,' and his chatty, egotistic books of travel, to realise his character, but in these it is drawn as firmly and coloured as richly as if Titian had survived to paint his features.

The passion for hoarding up little treasures of every kind—pebbles that friends had picked up, leaves that had been plucked on a certain day, odd mementoes of travel and incident—was always strongly developed in Andersen. He hated to destroy anything, and he dragged about with him, from one lodging to another, a constantly increasing store of what irritable friends were apt to consider rubbish. In like manner, he could not endure to tear up paper with writing upon it, even if that writing were disagreeable

or derogatory to his dignity. Hence, when his executors began to examine the piles of MS. that the poet had left behind him, they came upon such a mass of correspondence as few eminent persons can ever have bequeathed. Most people are glad to destroy any letter in which their own conduct is sharply criticised or in which reproof is administered to an obvious fault. But it was part of the crystal innocence of Andersen's character, than whom a simpler or a purer creature never breathed, to preserve with the utmost impartiality the good and the evil, the praise of his friends and their blame. Consequently, there is little need of personal memorials of Andersen. In his writings we can trace every change of temperament, every turn and whim of this guileless and transparent mind.

Few English people, perhaps, are aware how numerous and how versatile are the writings of Andersen. He attempted almost every form of authorship in the course of his long life. He was born on April 2, 1805, at Odense, in the Danish island of Funen. His father, a poor shoemaker, whose love of books and book-learning made him discontented with his trade, died in the poet's early childhood, and until his confirmation Andersen was left in the charge of his mother, an ignorant and superstitious but kindly person. Until Andersen's death the true raciness and originality of her mind were unknown; but her letters to her son, which then came to light, prove her to have been, in shrewdness, wit, and sense, worthy to be the mother of a great man. Except during the few hours' wretched instruction at the Poor School, he was chiefly occupied with a little theatre of marionettes, on

which he brought out various pieces, generally of his own composition. This early taste for theatrical pursuits was nourished in the child by a visit paid to Odense by some of the company of the Royal Theatre of Copenhagen. The actors gave special performances, and on these occasions Andersen managed to get on the boards and mix with the supers. After this, of course, the Copenhagen stage was the great aim of his life. After his confirmation in the autumn of 1819, he travelled up to the capital to try his fortune, and entered the dancing and singing school at the theatre; but it soon became plain that he had no histrionic talent, and when his voice broke he was obliged to leave. However, he had managed to awaken interest in several very distinguished men—in Collin, Rahbek, the Oersteds, Baggesen, Weyse, and Siboni—and by their efforts he obtained a free entrance into the Latin school at Slagelse; when the rector of the school, the learned Meisling, was transferred to the college at Helsingör, he took Andersen with him. Meisling, however, though learned, was unsympathetic, and without understanding at all what was great and lovely in Andersen's character, made his eccentricities the object of untiring ridicule. The young man who had already written 'The Dying Child,' and appeared as a poet, in 1827, in such influential journals as the 'Kjöbenhavnspost' and Heiberg's 'Flyvende Post,' could at last bear this no longer, and came back to Copenhagen, where L. C. Möller introduced him into the University in 1828. The year after he published his first important work, 'A Journey on Foot from Holmen's Canal to the East Point of Amager,' and the same year had produced, on the boards of the

Royal Theatre, 'Love on St. Nicholas' Tower,' a comic vaudeville in rhymed verse, which parodied the romantic dramas of the day; during the ensuing Christmas season appeared his first collection of poems, of which several already had attained considerable notoriety in the 'Flyvende Post.' In 1830 Andersen made the first of many travels, a tour in Funen and Jutland, and in 1831 published a volume of 'Fancies and Sketches,' which was not so well received as his earlier works, and was especially cut up by Hertz in his powerful 'Gjenganger-Breve.' This want of success, a blighted love experience, and other misfortunes threw Andersen into a painful condition of despondency, and he was ordered to travel for his health. He went to Germany, and published on his return 'Shadow-Pictures of a Tour in the Hartz and Saxon Switzerland.' In 1832 appeared his 'Vignettes of Danish Poets,' and a new volume of poems entitled 'The Twelve Months of the Year.' He was lucky enough to receive a draft of money for travelling from the Government in the spring of 1833, and proceeded to Paris, where he met the enfeebled and almost blind P. A. Heiberg. Later in the year he was in Rome, where he fell in with Thorwaldsen and Bödtcher, and with his own great opponent, Hertz. In the summer of 1834 Andersen returned to Copenhagen, where in the meantime his beautiful dramatic poem 'Agnete and the Merman,' which he had sent home from Switzerland, had appeared. After his return was published in 1835 his exquisite romance 'The Improvisatore,' which he had commenced in Rome, and in which he sketches the life of the country folk in Italy, as in his next romance, 'O. T.,' which came

out the year after, he sketches the same in Denmark. But in the meantime, by the publication of his first volume of 'Eventyr,' or 'Fairy Tales' in 1835, Andersen had laid the foundation of his immense reputation, and the successive series of these stories, unapproached in modern literature for depth, pathos, and humour, continued to appear Christmas by Christmas, the most welcome gift to young and old. In 1852 they ceased to be entitled 'Eventyr' and were called 'Historier.' To the same class belongs the inimitable 'Picture-Book without Pictures,' 1840. To his novels Andersen added in 1848 'The Two Baronesses.' In 1837 came 'Only a Player.' Another novel was 'To be or Not to be.' In 1853 Andersen published his own autobiography, under the title of 'My Life's Romance.' As a dramatic author he has also shown no small genius, though this is not the most brilliant side of his life's work. The romantic dramas of 'The Mulatto,' 1840, and 'The King is Dreaming,' 1844; the romantic operas of 'Little Christie,' 1846; 'The Wedding by Lake Como,' 1848; with certain small comedies, especially 'The New Lying-In Room' ('Den ny Barselstue;' Barselstuen being a very popular piece by Holberg), 1845, attained very marked success at the Royal Theatre, which was also the case with the fairy comedies, 'More than Pearls and Gold,' 'Ole Lukoie' and 'Hyldemoer,' which were brought out in 1849, 1850, and 1851 respectively at the Casino Theatre at Copenhagen. Andersen was incessantly moving hither and thither over the Continent of Europe, and on one occasion he crossed the Mediterranean Sea. The results of his observations were given to the public in a variety of chatty

and picturesque volumes, of which the most characteristic were 'A Poet's Bazaar,' 1841; 'In Sweden,' 1849; and 'In Spain,' 1863.

Andersen's nature craved the excitement of travel, and wherever he went he made himself acquainted with the prominent literary people of the place. There is no doubt that this personal habit helped his genius to make itself heard outside the borders of Denmark sooner than it would otherwise have done, but this has also been greatly exaggerated in Denmark, where some unworthy but not inexplicable jealousy was felt of the ubiquitous poet who carried his fame over Europe with him. It is well known that Andersen was a visitor of Dickens's at Gadshill; two years earlier he had been Wagner's guest in Berlin, and almost every literary or artistic man of eminence in Europe received a visit from him at one time or another. In 1861 he was at Rome just in time to see Mrs. Browning before her death, and to receive from her the last stanzas she ever wrote:—

'And oh! for a seer to discern the same!'
Sighed the South to the North.
'For a poet's tongue of baptismal flame,
To call the tree or the flower by its name!'
Sighed the South to the North.

The North sent therefore a man of men
As a grace to the South,
And thus to Rome came Andersen.
'Alas, but you must take him again!'
Said the South to the North:

verses which the old poet was never tired of repeating in his broken English.

Among all his multitudinous writings, it is of course

his so-called Fairy Tales, his 'Eventyr,' that show most distinctly his extraordinary genius. No modern poet's work has been so widely disseminated throughout the world as these stories of Andersen's. They affect the Hindoo no less directly than the Teutonic mind; they are equally familiar to children all over the civilised world. It is the simple earnestness, humour, and tenderness that pervades them, their perfect yet not over-subtle dramatic insight, their democratic sympathy with all things in adverse and humble circumstances, and their exquisite freshness of invention that characterise them most, and set them on so lofty a height above the best of other modern stories for children. The style in which they are composed is one never before used in writing; it is the lax, irregular, direct language of children that Andersen employs, and it is instructive to notice how admirably he has gone over his earlier writings and weeded out every phrase that savours of pedantry or contains a word that a child cannot learn to understand. When he first wrote these stories he was under the influence of the German writer Musaeus, and from 1830 to about 1835 he was engaged in gradually freeing himself from this exotic manner, and in bringing down his style to that perfection of simplicity which is its great adornment.

In character, Andersen was one of the most blameless of human creatures. A certain irritability of manner that almost amounted to petulance in his earlier days, and which doubtless arose from the sufferings of his childhood, became mellowed, as years went on, into something like the sensitive and pathetic sweetness of a dumb animal. There was an appeal in his physical appearance that

claimed for him immunity from the rough ways of the world, a childlike trustfulness, a tremulous and confiding affectionateness that threw itself directly upon the sympathy of those around. His personality was somewhat ungainly: a tall body with arms of very unusual length, and features that recalled, at the first instant, the usual blunt type of the blue-eyed, yellow-haired Danish peasant. But it was impossible to hold this impression after a moment's observation. The eyes, somewhat deeply set under arching eyebrows, were full of mysterious and changing expression, and a kind of exaltation which never left the face entirely, though fading at times into reverie, gave a singular charm to a countenance that had no pretension to outward beauty. The innocence and delicacy, like the pure frank look of a girl-child, that beamed from Andersen's face, gave it an unique character hardly to be expressed in words; notwithstanding his native shrewdness, he seemed to have gone through the world not only undefiled by, but actually ignorant of its shadow-side. The one least pleasing feature of his character was his singular self-absorption. It was impossible to be many minutes in his company without his referring in the naïvest way to his own greatness. The Queen of Timbuctoo had sent him this; the Pacha of Many Tails had given him such an Order; such a little boy in the street had said, 'There goes the great Hans Andersen!' These reminiscences were incessant, and it was all the same to him whether a little boy or a great queen noticed him, so long as he was favourably noticed. If, however, the notice was unfavourable, he was inconsolable for the time being, and again in this case it mattered nothing from what source

the censure came. The Norwegian poet Welhaven used to relate that he was once in a Copenhagen coffee-house with Andersen, when the latter, glancing at one of the lowest and most ribald prints of the hour, became suddenly excessively agitated. With trembling hands he pointed out to Welhaven a passage in which some miserable penny-a-liner had pointed a coarse jest with an allusion to Andersen's appearance. 'Is it possible,' Welhaven asked, 'that you, with a European reputation, care what such a man says of you in such a place?' 'Yes,' replied Andersen, with tears in his eyes, 'I do—a little!' This intense craving for perpetual laudation, no matter from whom, was an idiosyncrasy in Andersen's character not to be confounded with mere vulgar vanity. It sometimes assumed really magnificent proportions, as when he once said to a friend of mine, an old friend of his own, in deprecation of some fulsome praise from abroad, 'It is true that I am the greatest man of letters now living, yet the praise should not be to me, but to God who has made me so.' It was a strange and morbid characteristic, to be traced, no doubt, to the distressing hardships of his boyhood. It was harmless and guileless, but it was none the less fatiguing, and it was so strongly developed that no biographical sketch of him can be considered fair that does not allude to it. During his lifetime, it would have been inhuman to vex his pure spirit by dwelling on a weakness that was entirely beyond his own control; but it is only just to his own countrymen, who have been so harshly blamed for their want of sympathy with him, to mention the fact which made Andersen's constant companionship a thing almost in-

tolerable. In a small community like that of Copenhagen, a little personal peculiarity of this kind is not so easily overlooked as in a wider circle.

He passed peacefully away at eleven o'clock on the morning of August 4, 1875. He died just outside the northern suburb of Copenhagen, at Rolighed, in the arms of a family who had devoted themselves for years to the care of their eminent guest; here he fell asleep, in the truest sense, for out of a mild and peaceful slumber of many hours' duration, he never awoke. He had been suffering acutely and hopelessly from a complaint that now proved to have been cancer, and for some years past his life had been one of ceaseless suffering, patiently and even heroically borne. Four months before the end he had completed his seventieth year, and in the festivities of that day he had been able in great measure to join. He could never rally from the relapse brought on by the excitement of this birthday, which was celebrated by the whole nation, from the royal family downwards, as a public holiday. He had the joy of receiving the greatest honour a poet can take from his country, the erection of a statue which will remind all coming generations of his outward form and feature, and having lived to receive this glory, not from one man or one clique of men, but from all Denmark, it was permitted him to rest from his suffering. He could not have died at a moment when his fame, spread from one end of the world to the other, was more living than it is now, and in dying he took from among us the most popular of all contemporary writers of the imagination. It is said that the very last literary subject in which he took interest was the history and

work of his own great predecessor, the Hindoo fabulist, Bidpai, and the best books on that writer lay strewed upon his death-bed.

IV.

So many poets came up to the University of Copenhagen in 1828, that some wit dubbed them the four greater and the twelve minor prophets. This classification caused a great deal of amusement at the time, and is still remembered because Hans Christian Andersen happened to be one of the major prophets, and Paludan-Müller to be one of the minor. The minor prophet, indeed, lived to see himself easily first among the children of Parnassus in Denmark.

Frederik Paludan-Müller was the third son of a remarkable man, Jens Paludan-Müller, who died as Bishop of Aarhuus, and who became famous after his death as a theological writer of much vigour. Each of his sons became distinguished in one way or another. Frederik, the poet, was born at Kjerteminde, a little town in Funen, on February 7, 1809. He went to school at Odense in 1820, a few months after Andersen—poor little forlorn adventurer that he was—left that city for the capital. In 1832 he wrote four romances, in the hope of gaining a prize offered by the Society of Fine Arts. He was unsuccessful, but the romances, which were published, attracted attention. The same year he brought out a romantic drama, 'Love at Court,' which had a considerable run, and still holds the stage. But when, in 1833, he printed his delicious poem of 'The Dancing Girl,' with

all its profusion of wit, pathos, and melody, his position as a poet was made. In 1834 he opened a new poetic vein, since admirably worked by Swinburne amongst ourselves, and by Paul Heyse in Germany, with his lyrical drama of 'Amor and Psyche,' a work displaying stilistic gift of the first order, and which produced much such a sensation in Copenhagen as, thirty years later, attended 'Atalanta in Calydon' with us. At this point he began to go a little wrong; his next production, a story in rhyme, called 'Zuleima's Flight,' being tinged with Byronisms and other inscrutable insipidity. The two volumes of 'Poems,' however, in 1836 and 1838, redeemed his reputation. All this time the poet had been quietly working away at his literary and juridical studies, and had attained his thirtieth year with no more exciting experience than could be contained in a walking-tour through the north of Zealand. He set out, however, in 1838, for a two years' wandering over Europe; he only once left Denmark again. The life of such a hermit is but a catalogue of his works. In 1841 he published his lyrical drama of 'Venus,' and the first part of 'Adam Homo,' an epic which it is customary to mention as his masterpiece. In 1844 appeared the noble drama of 'Tithonus' and the delicate idyl of 'The Dryad's Wedding.' His later productions were the conclusion of 'Adam Homo,' 1848; 'Abel's Death,' 1854; 'Kalanus,' 1857; 'Paradise,' 1861; 'Spirits of Darkness in the Night,' 1862; 'Ivar Lykke's Story,' a prose novel; 'The Times are Changing,' a comedy, 1874; and 'Adonis,' 1874. In the face of such a barren list of titles, the curse of Babel does indeed become a burden. It is useless to recommend the reader to the

books themselves, and how is a weary critic to persuade him of the value of their contents? This, however, I shall presently attempt to do.

In 1872 Paludan-Müller was living in one of a little group of houses in the Royal Park of Fredensborg, on the left-hand side in driving up to the palace. It would be difficult to secure a more poetic situation. The great undulating park extended on all sides, with its classic solitude, its rich hoard of memories from the last century, and its delicious greensward swept by the long boughs of the beeches. From the back of the poet's house, the park sloped away to the Esrom Lake, the most beautiful of all the beech-surrounded meres of North Zealand. There, in the most exquisite silence, broken only by the sound of a deer that came down to drink, the poet could watch from dawn to gloom

> The lake-reflected sun illume
> The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom.

The court was never at Fredensborg, except for a little time in the summer, and its idyllic quiet was unbroken. The old palace was always there to remind the wanderer, with its clean white walls and green cupola, of the beperiwigged gentlemen and bepatched ladies that had flirted down its smooth arcades. The place fostered the morbid melancholy of Paludan-Müller, and yet it possessed that note of refinement and personal elegance which he would have missed in a retreat more purely sylvan. When I saw him first he had not received a stranger for years; he asked pardon for his manifest agitation, as some veritable Robinson Crusoe might do in suddenly re-viewing a European face. But

he was then at the very point of recovering from his strange melancholy illness, and so far woke up to new life that he proposed to me a series of early morning walks, and at last conceived it possible that he might journey to London. This he never contrived to do, but he returned to Copenhagen and to society, and when I saw him again in 1874 he was looking ten years younger. He had a singularly fine and spiritual face, the eyes large and clear, the hair silvery when I knew him, but deep yellow in earlier life. In speaking he expressed himself with emphasis, and in some cases a little too dogmatically for modern habits of thought, and he had but slight personal sympathy for his contemporaries. I was full of enthusiasm for the Norwegian poet, Ibsen, and spoke of him on one occasion to Paludan-Müller, but he confined himself to a rather cynical condemnation of the close of 'Brand.' It was evident that he found no place in art for anything but the ideal beauty of which he was himself so exquisite an exponent. His adoration for the memory of his father was a very marked point in his character; in a review of one of his books I had especially indulged this pious foible in order to please him, and he recollected it two years afterwards with vehement commendation. The news of his death was a great surprise to his friends, for he had regained an unwonted vigour in 1874 and 1875. But the winter of 1876, that was fatal to Christian Winther, was fatal also to him, and within three days; for while the latter died on December 30, Paludan-Müller died on December 27, 1876.

There can be little doubt, that posterity will judge 'Adam Homo' to be its author's greatest claim to a place among poets of the first class. This epic, in *ottava rima*,

is the history of a single man, a Dane in the Denmark of the poet's day, from his cradle to his grave. The hero is a Philistine of the Philistines, but his character is worked out with an irony so subtle, that we begin by sympathising with the man that we end in ridiculing and despising. The poem is full of great and original qualities; humour and satire give place in rapid interchange to descriptive and pathetic passages of the most delicate beauty. Dr. Brandes, in his brilliant volume on the modern Danish poets ('Danske Digtere,' 1877), a work no Scandinavian student should be without, has very justly said of 'Adam Homo,' that it is 'a piece of Denmark, a piece of our history, a piece of living cloth cut out of the web of time.' But to the foreign reader it certainly lacks the cosmopolitan interest of the writer's lyrical dramas. Of these the greatest is, without doubt, 'Kalanus,' and I cannot give a better idea of the genius of Paludan-Müller, than by an analysis of this noble poem.

The scene is laid far back in heroic times, when the great presence of Alexander overshadowed the ancient world, and the story of his patience, and his labour, and his glory was in the mouth of all men living. Kalanus, an Indian, born by the Ganges, and brought up in a temple of Brama, has been living in the hills near the sources of the Indus, as a solitary mystic, worshipping the Invisible Unity whom men call Brama. Day after day, kneeling by the river-side among the palms, he has prayed and longed for a manifestation of the incarnate Godhead. Born about the same time as the son of Philip of Macedon, his life has been spent in the silence of unbroken devotion, tended by his old mother and a faithful slave. Meanwhile,

Alexander has driven like a tempest through the world, achieving the ultimate possible aim of an active sensuous nature. To Kalanus in his mystical existence of almost supernatural calm comes the glorious Alexander, sailing up the Indus with his fleet; the mystic had been praying most importunately for the divine vision—

> There by the prow I saw *him* stand,
> With helmless hair, and like the morning sun!
> His lotus-eyes flashed beams of radiance round!
> For ever all my heart and soul are his!

In absolute faith that this is Brama, he forces himself into Alexander's presence. The conqueror, pleased with his enthusiasm, invites him to join his train, and forthwith Kalanus, his old mother, and all their small possessions, are moving with the Greek army in its westward retreat. The first important halt is at Pasargadæ, in Persia, and here the play opens and continues to the end.

The first act begins with a fine symphony that strikes the key-note of the whole play at once. Kalanus and his mother are saluting the rising sun with their song of morning prayer, that their pure souls may rise with his into the ethereal kingdom of the Truth, losing body and sense in the perfection of the soul. This is the day on which Kalanus is to have audience of Alexander, and he counts the hours till the splendid moment shall arrive. Sankara, his mother, who knows nothing of his conviction, is troubled by his sudden passion for the Great King, and asks its cause. 'Why,' she asks, 'is the clear flame of thy devotion, which no wind could move, now become a quivering tongue of unsteady fire? Has the sight of one man so changed thee?' Then he unfolds to her his new-born faith,

that this hero, that man called Alexander, is no other than the universal Brama made flesh to visit humanity. To his dazzled and inexperienced imagination all things seem to point to this one goal, and his intensity easily wins Sankara to his view. Most subtly is the growth of this new faith, born of desire and introspection, and fed by distance from its object, sketched by the poet in Kalanus' confession to his mother; we are won into love and respect for the mild mystic at once, and the dreamier his speculations are, the more musical is his expression of them. Passing over some side-scenes of great interest, we move on to the meeting of Kalanus and Alexander. The Indian approaches the palace as if it were a sanctuary, but his soul has no fear of the divinity; all his nature is absorbed in that pure love that casts out fear; he will at last wind his frail humanity round the omnipotent deity, as the ivy curls round the straight stem of the cocos-palm. Alexander meets him with the light patronage of an emperor at his ease, rallying Kalanus good-naturedly on his reticence and gloom, but saying nothing so obviously mortal as to shake the Indian in his confidence. Presently the conversation turns on those questions of divine ethics which are nearest to the heart of Kalanus. The reticence of the mystic melts in the fiery heat of his own ecstasy, and pours itself along the channels of Alexander's activities and aims, so strange to him. His soul overflows with the sudden accession of new thoughts and new desires, and the king, becoming deeply interested in his impassioned admirer, adopts a seriousness unusual to him, and exerts his great and masculine intelligence in presenting new ideas of energetic action to the passive Indian. The soul of Kalanus, in his own esteem,

now first wakes into full bloom of thought; this one interview with the divine though concealed Brama has effected it,—

> As in my country, after one night's rain,
> The desert blossoms with a million flowers;

—and he throws himself into the dust in adoration.

The beginning of the next act is occupied with the humours of two Greek philosophers—Mopsos, a sensual atheist and scoffer; Pyrrhon, a troubled doubter—who argue, and after a while combine to cross-question Kalanus and to trouble his pure soul, unused to such a spirit of false philosophy. To Mopsos the enthusiasm of Kalanus for the king is merely the cringing of a toady; to Pyrrhon, it is a mystery of genuine belief almost incredible in its novelty. Alexander and Hephæstion join the three, and Kalanus once more basks in the sunlight of Brama's supposed presence. All minor vexations are lost in the joys of adoration. The progress of this long scene is in the highest degree masterly; the five characters are drawn with a firm and vigorous hand, and the interest, though of a purely intellectual character, is sustained and heightened to the end. Kalanus, whose utterances during his season of complete conviction were conspicuous for harmony, becomes more and more fragmentary and discordant as Alexander, in the easy neighbourhood of friends, slips into a frivolous vein of badinage that is most unlike the spirit of Brama. As the wine heats his brain, Alexander becomes still more jocose, and orders Kalanus to dispute with Mopsos on philosophical questions; the Indian, struggling against his own dejection, obeys. The selfish scepticism of Mopsos is reproved by the sublime mysticism of his

opponent, who proclaims that the ultimate desire of the soul is to be absorbed into the Eternal,—

> Returning like a drop of dew, and lost
> In that great fountain-ocean whence it came.

As this great idea, new to all the scoffing Greeks, is being discussed and ridiculed, the doors burst open, and the whole changes into one of those splendid scenes of glowing, sensuous colour, in painting which Paludan-Müller shows a singular delight. A chorus of girls, led by two of the most distinguished hetairai of the time, all garlanded, and singing to the music of stringed instruments, rush into the palace. No one heeds Kalanus, who has risen behind Alexander, and stands there rigid and pale with passion. There follows some exquisite choral writing, and at last Thais, pouring out her soul into a lyric that is like a 'god's voice hidden in a bird,' throws her lute aside and flings herself into the arms of Alexander. But before she can reach her royal lover, Kalanus is between them, with a knife, ready to sacrifice the impious nymph. The king angrily brushes him aside, Thais rushes to embrace Alexander, and the whole company, singing and shouting, leave the palace to seek fresh revels elsewhere. Kalanus is left alone, a dying priest in a polluted shrine; the god he has been worshipping proved to be a mere man, the slave of wine and women, tossed about by vulgar and ungodlike passions. He departs in unutterable sorrow.

In the third act, Alexander, repenting of his folly under the exhaustion of the morning after the revel, is troubled at the absence of Kalanus, and learning that a

pyre is being built on which it is reported that the Indian is about to destroy himself, he supposes that the cause of Kalanus's despair is his own harshness, and starts in person to reassure him of favour. In a later act Sankara and her son are discovered in their hut, and Kalanus is sleeping. He wakes calm and quiet, but when Sankara attempts to dissuade him from self-immolation, his purpose is shown to be firm and absolute, and again she gives way before his more powerful will. But in his sleep he has had a glorious vision of Brama, and his fancy is no longer haunted by the desire of an anthropomorphic revelation of the Godhead, but is securely content to pass into the splendour of a Presence whose form and fashion he knows not, but in whom he trusts with an infinite repose. This vision of glory, and a clearer intellectual perception of the mystery of divine things, lift him above all mundane hopes and fears. His mother leaves him to prepare the bath of purification, and Alexander enters, addressing Kalanus with gracious courtesy. To the conqueror's intense surprise, he finds, instead of a suppliant, broken-hearted at his feet, a calm and resolute opponent. Alexander assures him of his friendship; takes for granted that this report of a funeral pyre is untrue; commands, entreats, at last kneels to him for a promise to save his own life; storms at him with sudden passion; entreats again, but to no avail. Kalanus stands outside the magic ring, and in the power of his purity is stronger of will than the world's master. This is one of the most powerful scenes in the poem. Tired out with his efforts, Alexander leaves him at last, swearing to prevent his purpose with physical force. But here also the mystic's will is stronger than the king's, and in the last

act Alexander sanctions the burning of Kalanus. The philosopher approaches his own fiery tomb with a solemn elation, a sublime joy. Dismissing the troops, casting aside the adornments that Alexander has sent to do him honour, he gathers his own countrymen about him, mounts the pyre, and in the midst of a choral invocation to the spirit of Brama, expires, his soul rising to the skies like wine poured out into the fire. The chorus around proclaim his absorption into the Universal Oneness that is spirit and light.

The work which seems to me to approach most nearly to the classic severity and grace of 'Kalanus' is the last thing that Paludan-Müller published, his greeting to approaching Death, of whom he had ever been a lover. This is 'Adonis,' a short poem of less than fifty stanzas, in the manner of the early mythological studies in which the poet developed his poetic individuality in its purest and most ideal form. It belongs to the same class of his writings as 'Tithon' and 'Amor and Psyche,' though it is much slighter and more direct than these. Charon is represented as just setting his sail to catch the weak wind that blows along the Styx, when he hears a voice cry to him from the landing-place, and before he has time to turn, a beautiful youth has leaped into his boat. The thin ghosts shudder together at the unwelcome coming of one so full of life. Charon inquires his name, and learns that it is Adonis, who, snatched away from men by Aphrodite, has found that good fortune at last a burden, whose heart has remained unsatisfied among all the Paphian roses, and who now has escaped from her, and goes to lay his devotion and his desire at the feet of Persephone,

flying from pleasure that he may find rest. 'For I must always love, and always love a goddess; that was my destiny, and I have followed it all my life. Venus and Proserpine were near when I was born, and before I began to breathe two goddesses were contesting to possess me.' Aphrodite has held his manhood first; now, weary of a love so exciting and so exhausting, he turns with irrepressible longing to the goddess, crowned with calm leaves, in whose hushed dominions there are no budding and no falling flowers. The boat of Charon passes in silence down the dark channel, roofed in with rocks, the pulse of the oars alone breaking the deep stillness. Arrived at the harbour of death, a shade summons the coming shades to the banquet of Pluto. Adonis sees them disappear, as he stands alone upon the desolate margin of the stream. Presently a dead-pale maiden comes, bearing a torch, and cries, 'Charon, is he come?' This girl Persephone sends daily to inquire if Adonis has arrived. At last, after so many years, the answer is 'Yes!' She binds his eyes, and leads him through the realms of death, down into the hall of the infernal gods, where, when his eyes are unbound, he sees Persephone sitting on her throne in silence and solitude. A tinge of red flies to her white cheeks, she opens her majestic arms, and breathes his name; with an outburst of passionate love he throws himself at her feet, and tells her how, even in the arms of Aphrodite, he has loved her, and now has flown to her to experience with her keener and deeper pleasures than the earthly goddess could give him. But Persephone repels his caresses, and warns him that she has no love to give him that can be likened with the love of passion: if he

seeks for that he is deceived, but she also loves him, and she has better gifts for whom she loves. While the beautiful Adonis still clasps her knees with his hands, she bids a maiden fill a beaker with the waters of Lethe. He drinks the divine nepenthe, and has only just time to respond to the kiss the goddess presses on his mouth, before he sinks at her feet in slumber, and lays his weary head upon her knee. So, through the ages these two remain unmoving,—Adonis in a happy dream, forgetful of all past passions and desires, Persephone bending over him with a grave smile, pleased at her final victory over her earthly rival. The open heavens are above them; and time is only marked by the waxing and the waning of the moon.

WALTHER VON DER VOGELWEIDE.

When the history of mediæval poetry comes to be written we shall understand, perhaps, what must remain very dark till then, how it was that during the marvellous twelfth century, amid all the chaos of the shattering and building of empires, such sudden simultaneous chords of melody were shot crosswise through the length and breadth of Europe, interpenetrating Iceland and Provence, Acquitaine and Austria, Normandy and Italy, with an irresistible desire for poetic production. In that mysterious atmosphere, in an air so burdened with electric force, the ordinary rules of germination and growth were set aside; out of barbarous races, and wielding the uncouthest of tongues, poets sprang full-armed, so many Athenes born suddenly adult from the forehead of the new Gothic civilisation. That was an age of rapid movement and brilliant development, an age thirsting for discovery and invention, ready with one hand to fill the West with the new-found marvel of the pointed arch, with the other to push with sword and cross far into the fabulous East. It was at such a time, under such violent auspices, that poetry was born, full-grown, in Germany; the rude-bud of folksong blossoming in one single generation into the most elaborate art,

only to wither again, as is the wont of such sudden blooms, in as short a time as it had taken to expand. No more such brilliant verse was written in Germany, until the time of Goethe, as was produced between the years 1150 and 1220, by a group of poets residing mainly at the courts of Austria and Thuringia. It would be out of place here to give any sketch, however slight, of the influences brought to bear upon them from without. We must hurry over the various cardinal points which demand mention, before we can intelligibly introduce the subject of this memoir. It was about the year 1140 that an Austrian knight, whose name has not been preserved, gathered into epical shape the scattered ballads which form what we know as the 'Nibelungenlied.' Somewhat later, another Austrian, of equally obscure personality, collected the priceless epos of 'Kudrun.' The minne-song, the lyric of love, was at the same epoch invented or imported by the great German lyrist, Heinrich von Veldecke, and his example was shortly followed by the simultaneous outburst of the four great poetic voices of mediæval Germany—the nightingales as they called themselves—Gottfried von Strassburg, Hartmann von Aue, Wolfram von Eschenbach, and Walther von der Vogelweide. The genius of the first three of these was essentially epical. In the 'Tristan' of Gottfried, in the 'Iwein' of Hartmann, in the 'Parzival' and the 'Titurel' of Wolfram, we have the four great epics of romance literature, the four poetic pillars on which the whole structure of High-German language and literature rests. In these unique works, steeped in the purest colours of knight-errantry and chivalry, and written in verse-forms of astonishingly delicate art, we have in its

original and undiluted form that spirit of romance that has so often since fascinated and bewitched the youth of Europe into more or less fatuous imitation. By the side of this native poetry may be set the epics of foreign extraction, the masterpiece among which was that 'Alexandersage' of the Pfaffe Lamprecht so extravagantly eulogised by Gervinus. But this epical literature was not the sole product of the age; a lyrical growth accompanied it, represented by myriads of minor singers, and one man that by common consent ranks as high as the three great epicists. This first of mediæval German song-writers was Walther von der Vogelweide.

Over the earliest years of his life there rests an obscurity which is likely to remain impenetrable. We know neither the year nor the place of his birth, his rank in society, nor the name of his family. In lack of clearer data than his own verses give us, we may roughly put his birth down at about the year 1170, or nearly a century before that of Dante. That he was of gentle, but not noble birth, is judged by the title given him by all of his contemporaries of Herr Walther, the 'Herr' being the token of the knightly middle class, in contradistinction to the burghers, who were styled Meister.[1] Over his appellative 'von der Vogelweide' a great deal of ingenious speculation has been expended. 'Walther of the Bird Meadow' has been fancifully supposed to be a name adopted by himself,

[1] It is perhaps not generally known that the race of meistersingers has been extinguished only in our own day, and that there is still alive, at the age of over eighty, at Ulm, a grave-digger named J. Best, who is absolutely the last survivor of the last guild of meistersingers in Germany. This guild was dissolved in 1839.

either to signify that he was born in some hamlet secluded in the midst of the forest, among the birds, or else merely in token of his own great love for wild places and little birds. But 'Fogilweida' is understood to mean *aviarium* in Middle High German; that is to say, an enclosed space where birds are artificially confined. It would therefore be difficult to believe that the lover of wild things would take this name from choice, and fortunately the difficulty has been cleared up very lately by the discovery in an old manuscript of the thirteenth century, of the existence of an estate called Vogelweide in the Tyrol, which has now long since disappeared, and there is little doubt that it was hence our poet came, especially as one of his friends and followers, a sweet minor minne-singer of that time, Leutolt von Seven, was born, we know, in that very valley in Tyrol. This mountain province, even in that early time, had not a little thirst after literary glory, and several of its poets, contemporary with Walther, have been fortunate enough to have their 'Lieder' preserved, now to be piecemeal printed by modern admirers. Walther, however, was not satisfied with a local reputation, and very early in life he seems to have left the paternal home to seek his fortune in Vienna.

There was no more attractive city in Germany to a young man with his life before him than the capital of Austria in 1190. No part of the Empire was so prosperous or so devoted to the graceful arts as the neighbourhood of the Viennese court, and, what would have special fascination for Walther, nowhere were the poets so brilliant, so popular, and so famous in their art. Jealous of the undisputed supremacy of Cologne, Vienna was taking advan-

tage of its own security and prosperity to establish its position as the second city, at least, of the Empire, if it could not be the first. It seems that the raw lad from the Tyrol, with nothing to live on but his genius, came and put himself under the tuition of the most famous lyrist of that age, Reinmar the Old, and lost in the blaze of the Court and the noise of rival wits, we hear no more of him for eight years. It must not be imagined that he was idle during that time; it was no light task to learn to be a minne-singer. The poetry of that early age, so far from being the simple, wild-wood fluting that is idly and generally supposed, was a metrical art of the most elaborate kind, and one for the skilful performance of which a long and patient apprenticeship was needed. Out of the one hundred and eighty-eight poems of Walther's which exist, at least half are written in unique measures, and all in forms of his own invention. He soon surpassed all his forerunners, even Reinmar himself, in the intricate mysteries of verse, and it is worthy of no small admiration how supple the stiff old High German becomes in his masterly hands. We shall return to this matter; for the present it may suffice to point out that the blank years 1190–1198 must have been full of laborious exercise, and that all in which he differs from other poets in this, is that he has not seen fit to hand down to us his *juvenilia*. At the same time, there is no reason against supposing that many of his most beautiful love-songs, which carry no internal or external evidence of date, belong to this early period. However that may be, it is not till 1198 that we catch a distinct view of our poet for the first time.

Indeed, there is a theory that almost all the naïve and

spontaneous lyrics of Walther's minne-period date from this first Vienna life, and that it was the death of the Emperor Henry VI. that first woke the poet out of his dream of love and pleasure, and that aroused in him that noble spirit of patriotism which has made his name so fragrant ever since. Henry VI. had raised the Empire to a position of secure prosperity and dreaded power which it had never reached before; he was still in the flower of his age, and apparently at the opening of a brilliant career. Suddenly he died at Messina, on September 28, 1197, and the earliest political poem of Walther's that we possess evidently marks the tide of feeling at home when the deplorable news was brought to Germany. With his head resting in the palm of his hand, and one knee over the other, and his elbow resting on the upper knee, the poet sits on a rock overlooking the world, and speculates, not without dismay, how fortune, honour, and God's grace are to be reconciled in this bereaved and helmless state. In the next strophe he sees a great water rushing by, with fish in it, and gazing past it he sees the forest: and these fish, and the birds, beasts—yea, and the very worms in the forest, have their order and their rulers, but Germany has none. In the third part he is gifted with prophetic sight, and sees all things done, and hears all things said, by all the men and women in the world, and behold, they all with one accord lift up their hands to God and cry 'Woe! for the Pope is too young! Lord, help thy Christendom.' In this first poem of political import we have some of the most characteristic utterances of Walther's muse: desire of order and hatred of anarchy, yearning for the unity of Germany, and deep-rooted suspicion of the

Papacy. The mention of the youth of the Pope gives us a hint of the exact date of the poem, since Innocent III. was elected in January 1198, at the unusually early age of thirty-seven.

The death of the great Emperor was coeval with the breaking up of Walther's Viennese home. For some reason obscure to us, Austria was no longer favourable to his prospects. Perhaps the fate of Heinrich had less to do with it than the death of his beloved patron, Duke Friedrich, who was lingering in Palestine at the extreme end of the Third Crusade, and who fell, in April 1198, a few months before his great rival Richard Cœur de Lion defeated the French in the battle of Gisors. It was an epoch of great deeds and names sonorous with romance. While Walther was learning the art of poetry under Reinmar, the terrible Sultan Saladin had died. To return to Vienna: in place of Friedrich, Leopold VII. ascended the Austrian throne, and in him Walther had at first to mourn an irresponsive patron. We possess an artful elegy over Friedrich, in which his successor is warned to imitate the generosity of the duke, but to so little purpose that we find Walther leaving Vienna precipitately, to offer his singing services to Philip of Suabia. As Friedrich died in April, and as we find Walther singing at Mayence on occasion of King Philip's coronation in September of the same year, we can hardly allow that he gave Leopold time to do justice to his powers. The poem is very flattering, but from a lyrical point of view particularly flat and inefficient. The excellent and handsome Philip responded, however, to our poet's praise of his magnanimity and his beauty, so far, at least, as to take him with him in 1199 to the Diet of

Magdeburg, where Walther gives us a brilliant little picture of the procession of Philip and his Greek queen Irene to church, attended by a gay throng of Thuringian and Saxon nobles. Next year he was back again in Vienna, welcomed this time by Leopold, and rewarded for his songs by largesse from the hands of that young 'glorious and liberal' prince. On May 28, 1200, when Leopold took the sword in solemn pomp as Duke of Austria, gifts of 'not less than thirty pounds' were made in all directions, and Walther, who had complained in 1198 that the showers of fortune fell on all sides of him but left him dry, was plentifully moistened with golden rain, and had his debts paid. This brings us to the end of his first restless period. From 1200 until 1210 he seems to have stayed quietly in Austria.

The only important event that occurred during this peaceful decade was the death of his great master in poesy, Reinmar the Old. This occurred in 1207. Reinmar, who originally came from Hagenau—that very Hagenau where, in Walther's early manhood, Richard of England was arraigned before a Diet of the Empire—was *par éminence* the poet of melancholy passion and tender reverie, and very unlike the joyous, manly figure of Walther. There is a tradition that they did not live together on the friendliest terms—a notion that is curiously borne out by the wording of a very musical and thoughtful elegy by the younger on the elder poet, in which he expressly says that it is not Reinmar he mourns, but his art. The death of Reinmar gave occasion to one of the most important contemporary notices of Walther which have come down to us. Gottfried von Strassburg,

far away in Alsace, received the news as he was writing the eighth book of his great epic of 'Tristan.' He broke off to celebrate and mourn 'the nightingale of Hagenau,' and to weave into his narrative a critical sketch of all the great poets of his time. Reinmar has fallen with the banner in his grasp, and the minne-singers are left without a leader. Gottfried takes up his prophecy:—

Who now shall lead our congregation?
Whose voice guide this dear singing nation?
I know full well whom ye will find
Bear best that banner to your mind;
That Vogelweide it must be
Whose clear high voice rings merrily
In fields and in the open air!
Who sings of wondrous things and fair,
Whose art is like an organ's tone,
Whose songs are tuned in Citheron
To please our goddess Lady of Love.[1]

This testimony, from such a man, proves how far the young poet's fame had already reached, and how highly he was esteemed.

Except that in this same year, 1207, Walther was so frightened by comets and shooting stars that he was sure the Last Judgment was arriving, nothing seems to have occurred in his history until 1210, when we find him in the service of Duke Berhard of Karinthia, where he was so ill at ease that in 1211 he migrated again; and this time to the very home of polite letters, Thuringia, where the young landgrave, Hermann, gathered around him all the most advanced spirits of the age. At the Thuringian Court on the Wartburg, close by Eisenach, Albrecht von Halberstadt was busy with his German version of Ovid's

[1] Appendix BB.

'Metamorphoses;' Herbert von Fritslar was composing his epic on the tale of Troy; Heinrich von Veldecke, the greatest of Walther's predecessors, had just died, hard by in Naumburg; and, best of all, Walther learnt here to know the rare and exalted genius of Wolfram von Eschenbach, who was writing his deathless 'Parzival,' amid the roaring joviality and hospitable freedom of the Wartburg, of which Walther, whom it suited less, gives a striking picture. This seems to have been a time of depression and morbid irritation with our wandering poet. His bitterest epigrams against Pope Innocent III. date from this period, and the merry life at Eisenach seems to have jarred upon his melancholy. He is plaintively humorous against a certain knight Gerhard Etze, who has stolen his horse, and on whom he revenges himself by describing him thus:

> He rolls his eyes as monkeys do,
> But most he's like the lewd cuckoo,

and other such uncouth pleasantries in the lumbering manner of the Middle Ages. From Thuringia the dissatisfied man turned to the service of Dietrich, Margrave of Meissen, and remained with him till 1213. It is provoking, and a little humiliating, to read the verse-petitions addressed to one monarch after another, praying for protection and shelter, and urging liberality in the style of a charity sermon. Under Dietrich as under Hermann, Walther was a liege servant of the Emperor Otto IV., whose excommunication by the poet's pet aversion, Pope Innocent, provokes him to continual wrath. In all his poems against the Papacy, he writes with a freedom and a force that are truly remarkable, and Luther himself never

spoke out more plainly than Walther von der Vogelweide in one little 'Spruch' or sonnet, where he urges the division of all temporal and spiritual authority, that being given to God which is God's, and that to the Kaiser which is his. Germany was divided between rival Emperors. Otto IV. was pitted, to the great danger of the whole Hohenstaufen dynasty, against the legitimate heir to the throne, Friedrich, the young son of Henry VI. The civil war between these princes was carried on for ten years, and by-and-by we find Walther growing impatient with his patron, and urging him, at any cost, to endanger the unity of Germany no longer. Presently he describes with enthusiasm the fine presence and masculine beauty of Otto, but pathetically wishes he were as liberal as he is tall. Things rapidly get worse and worse, till at last Walther takes up his parable against Otto as a double-faced monster, and openly comes over to the cause of Friedrich. This was but the instinct of a wise rather than grateful man of the world, for the poem we have mentioned last seems to belong to the year 1215, in which Friedrich II. finally gained the day. A series of moving appeals to the clemency of Friedrich meet us next. If only the great man will smile, the poet's genius, now frozen as in winter, will reblossom and revive. He says that—

> Then will I sing again of little birds,
> Of heather, and of flowers, as once I sang:
> Of lovely women and their gracious words,
> And cheeks where roses red and lilies sprang.[1]

Vienna seems once more to have become his settled home, and in 1217 we read his farewell to Leopold, who, with the flower of Austrian chivalry, was then starting for

[1] Appendix CC.

Palestine on the fifth Crusade. Their departure leaves the court and city as empty and dull, we are told, as the departure of the knights of the Table Round, when they parted on the quest of the Graal, left Arthur's fabulous city. The public of Walther's day, it must be remembered, were even more familiar than we are with the Arthurian legends. The humorous tone of this song, however, soon fades in genuine apprehension, and we have a poem in which, in a strain of the tenderest and most child-like piety, he begs God to guard him as Gabriel guarded Jesus in the crib at Bethlehem. To this period belongs a curious lyrical tirade against the roughness of the young knights, who have no care for courtesy and the dignity of women. For such licentious and froward mediæval youth, Walther has but one lesson, and he repeats it incessantly—

And wilt thou gild the round of life, of women speak thou well.

The two years between Leopold's departure and his happy return in 1219 were lightened by brief visits to Styria and Bavaria, but he was back again in Vienna to welcome his prince, and to send a joyous note of congratulation after him when he set out once more, this time to be crowned at Rome in the winter of 1220. It must have been about the same year that he gained the friendship of Englebert, the stirring Prince Archbishop of Cologne, under whose special protection he flourished until 1225, when that gifted prelate was murdered by his own nephew. As time goes by, as the poet grows older, and as one friend and patron is taken from him after the other, he loses gradually the elasticity of intellect that had so ong sustained him, and there comes to be something almost

querulous in his tone. In cadences that become monotonous, he mourns the disappearance of honour, art, piety and virtue from the land, and it is not always that the sadness is tempered with so much sweetness as in the following poem, which we translate as literally as possible, with the poet's own rhymes and measure. He has been ill all through the winter, and only revives when spring is in the land once more :—

The hoar-frost thrilled the little birds with pain,
And so they ceased their singing;
But now the year grows beautiful again,
Anew the heath is springing.
I saw the flowers and grasses strive amain
Which should the taller be—
I told my lady this sweet history.

O how I suffered through the wintry hours
And grievous frosty weather!
I thought I nevermore should see red flowers
Among the dark green heather;
Yet, had I died, 'twere grief to friends of ours,
Good folk who when I sang
So gladly danced about for joy and sprang.

Had I been dumb on this delightful day,
For me it were great sorrow;
And Joy, so smitten, would have fled away,
And for no happier morrow
Would Joy have said farewell, O well-a-day!
May God preserve you all,
So that ye pray that health may me befall.[1]

The poet need not much longer detain us from the poems. After the murder of Engelbert the religious tendency of Walther's character seems to have deepened into pietism. It is, therefore, fitting that we meet with him next at the court of Hermann's successor, Ludwig, Landgrave of Thuringia, who, as husband of St. Elizabeth

[1] Appendix DD.

and patron of the ecclesiastical party, was as fanatic as his predecessor had been dilettante. But Hermann's ring of poets was by this time broken up; one by one they disappear, as is the wont of mediæval poets, fading from our sight with no record of their death. Ludwig was a child of the new age, the characteristic man of the fanatic epoch just commencing. With the year 1226 a sudden accession of pietism was felt throughout Europe; the life-long devotion of St. Francis of Assisi was crowned by his mystical death, and France was at once consolidated and fully reconciled to the Papacy by the accession of a still sweeter because more human saint, St. Louis. The power of the Empire, on the other hand, was visibly shaken. In vain Friedrich, 'the world's wonder,' had trusted to the power of his individual tact and genius to frustrate the petulant intrigues of Pope after Pope. He was the most brilliant of the Hohenstaufen emperors, but under him the power of the dynasty faded into air. His independence of religious opinion was not shared by the tributary Princes of the Empire, and among the malcontents none was more ardent than this young Landgrave of Thuringia. At the court of Eisenach, in 1226, Walther must have often seen the slight pale figure of the austere girl who ruled the ruler of the Thuringians. Mystical, hysterical, a dreamer of dreams, the wife of the Landgrave Ludwig was among the most singular of the characters of that dramatic age. We know her best as St. Elizabeth of Hungary, that very saint round whom some of the most charming myths of the Middle Ages cluster. Not, we may be sure, without strenuous help from her did Walther von der Vogelweide, in 1227, address a burning word of lyrical exhortation to Ludwig to start on a new Crusade, to win back Palestine

once more. In all Walther's latest poems we may fairly trace the inspiring influence of personal intercourse with St. Elizabeth, and the verses which breathe the fullest perfume of her pure devotion are among the deepest and most exalted that he has left. Always a child of his age and a representative man, we see him in the early troubadour times throwing all his force into the courtly cultus of the Lady of Love, in the internecine struggles of the candidates for empire, preaching with a louder, clearer voice than any other the gospel of unity and independence; now in his old age rousing to the new religious fervour, and contributing to its psalmody the crown of spiritual songs. Ludwig obeyed the summons, and started under the banner of the Emperor Friedrich in the autumn of 1227. Two beautiful 'Kreuzlieder' of Walther's—crusade-songs that manifestly belong to this pilgrimage—still exist, and from their wording it has been considered that one was composed after the melancholy delay at Otranto, where Ludwig and many others died of the plague, the other in Palestine itself. I myself, however, am inclined to hold with that most careful critic, the late Franz Pfeiffer, that these poems contain nothing that could not as well have been written in Germany as in the Holy Land. One strophe of the first will illustrate the measure and manner of them :—

O God, thy succour send us,
Thy saving right hand lend us,
Till all is done befriend us,
Till all this life is o'er;
In all our onward stations
Defend us from temptations:
We know the hellish nations
Are round us tempting sore;

O lead us with this ditty,
Right on to thy lone city!
Jerusalem, in pity
We weep for evermore![1]

With the departure of the Crusade, Walther's last light seems to have gone out. Sad and weary he turned to his old Tyrolese home, and found all there changed and desolate, after forty years of absence. It was probably then, and sore at heart to find himself forgotten, that the old world-weary poet composed his last and finest poem. The burden of life was never sung with more passionate sorrow; the very rhythm seems to have a wailing echo in it. We have essayed to render part of this exquisite elegy, with as little loss as possible of its naïveté and pathos:—

Woe's me, where are they vanished, my years of life that flew?
O has my life been but a dream, or has it all been true?
Was that a lie I cherished, that truth I vaunted so,
For, lo! it seems I've been asleep, and nothing now I know.

Now have I wakened; all is dim! I cannot understand
What, ere I slept, was plain to me as is my either hand;
This folk and land amidst of which my life arose so well,
Have grown my foes, and all is strange, and why I cannot tell.

My life is bowed with burdens, 'tis more than I can bear;
The world is full of sorrow and weary with despair;
And when I think of time long past, of wondrous vanished days,
Grief takes me like a sudden wave that breaks on ocean-ways.

The very youth that were so gay, how sadly now they fare,
Their eyes are bowed with wretchedness, their lips are full of care;
All they can do is mourn and weep; alas! why do they so?
Where'er I turn in all the world no happy man I know.

Dance, laughter, singing, all forgot and sadly put away,
No man throughout all Christendom has joy in these to-day;
Mark how the women little heed the tiring on their head!
The proudest knights are fain to lie in boorish drowsihead.

. . . . . .

[1] Appendix EE.

O would that I might bear a shield and take a sword in hand,
Would God that I were worthy found to fight for his dear land!
Then should I, poor albeit I seem, myself a rich man hold,
Yet not in acres have my wealth, nor master be of gold.
But I should bear upon my head the bright eternal crown
That one poor soldier with a spear can conquer for his own;
O might I that dear voyage make, and wend across the sea,
For ever would I 'glory!' cry, and nevermore 'Woe's me,'
And nevermore 'Woe's me!'[1]

Such, or rather far sweeter and more musical than we have art to make it, is Walther's swan-song, and with it he fades out of our sight. The only traditional fact that can help us is, that he retired to an estate near Würzburg, in Franconia, which Friedrich had given him, and that he quietly passed away about 1235, having survived all the rivals and friends of his youth. It is said that he was buried under a linden in a grass-plot surrounded by the cloisters of Würzburg Minster, in a sweet poetic sanctity, shielded from the world, yet open to the sky, and a leafy haunt of birds. Out of the great love he had for those his winged rivals of the woods, there arose a charming legend, that has done more than anything else to popularise his memory, to the effect that in his last testament he left a special provision directing that every day the birds should receive food and drink upon his tombstone, so that the branches of the linden that hung over him should never cease to resound with the voices he had so tenderly loved and so exquisitely imitated. Many poets competed to write his praise when he was dead, but none with such a naïve felicity as Hugo von Trimberg, in his well-known couplet:—

Hêr Walther von der Vogelweide,
Swer des vergæz', der tæt' mir leide.

'Who thee forgets, does me a wrong!'

[1] Appendix FF.

It is time now to examine the poems which remain to us of the work of this great man, whose troubled and unhappy life we have traced to its final repose. In the course of the previous narrative we have spoken of the political section of his verses, for it is from these that we have extracted, not without much labour, the greater part of the history of his life. Full of biographical interest as they are, however, they do not form by any means the most attractive or important section of his labour. In treating Walther as a political or as a religious poet, we must not forget that his great claim to remembrance rests, not on the lyrics which he composed in these capacities, but on the matchless 'minnelieder,' love-songs, which were the first-fruits of his youth. In reading these we find ourselves face to face with the earliest blossom of pure chivalry. As might be expected in the lyrical work of a generation that blended the sentiment of 'Kudrun' with that of 'Parzival,' the Scandinavian toleration of women, born of something like indifference, with the Provençal gallantry, born of poetic passion, the German love-songs of the school that culminated in Walther have a tender elevation, a serene sweetness more courtly than the Northern, less sensuous than the Southern erotic literature.

French influence on German literature was more epical than lyrical, more through such writers as Chrétien de Troyes than through the troubadours; although the laws of love, as settled by such potentates as the Countess of Champagne and Ermengarde, Lady of Narbonne, were accepted in the whole world of lovers, and are reflected by the simpler poems of the minne-singers. Some very curious and interesting links between Provence and Germany have however

been detected, and are worthy of note. Friedrich von Husen, a minne-singer who was wandering through Italy and the South of France from 1175 to 1186, must have become familiar with the Southern writers, for we find a strophe of Folquet, the troubadour-bishop of Marseilles, transferred into one of his poems. It may amuse the curious reader to set the passages side by side. This is the Provençal original:—

Qu'el garda vos eus ten tan car,
Quel cor s'en fai nescis semblar,
Quel sens i met l'engenh e la valor,
Si qu'en error
Laissal cor pel sen quel rete;
Qu'om me parla (maintas vetz m'endeve)
Qu'eu no sai que,
Em saluda qu'en non aug re.
Pero jamais nuls hom nom occaizo,
Sim saluda et eu mot no li so.

This is the paraphrase of Friedrich von Husen:—

Si darf mich des zîhen niet
Ichn hete si von herzen liep.
Des mohte si die wârheit an mir sehen,
Und wil sis jehen.
Ich kom sîn dicke in solhe nôt,
Daz ich den liuten guoten morgen bôt
Engegen der naht,
Ich was sô verre an si verdâht,
Daz ich mich underwîlent niht versan,
Und swer mich gruozte daz ichs niht vernan.

In Heinrich von Veldecke we meet similar signs of Provençal influence, and in the poems of Count Ruodolf of Neuenburg the imitations of Folquet and Peire Vidal form quite a prominent feature. Such conventional influence from the South, however, is rare, and what strikes us

most prominently in the lyrics of Walther, and what gives them that inherent excellence which has kept them fresh after six hundred years, is the resolute manner in which, in defiance of the artistic theories of the age, he constantly returns to the study of nature, and the folk-song as an inspired emanation from nature. His verse is full of clear little landscapes, warm with colour and sunlight, like those that fill the backgrounds of the earliest German and Flemish painters. The great fault of mediæval poetry being that it is conventional, mannered, and artificial, the student of that poetry best knows how like a fountain in the desert such a clear trill of song as the following ballad of Walther's seems. There is a versified paraphrase of it by Thomas Beddoes, the author of 'Death's Jest Book;' but so inaccurate is it, that I prefer to lay before the reader a translation in literal prose, the intricate harmony of the original measure seeming to defy translation:—

Under the linden
On the heath,
There our double bed we made;
There might you find
Indeed
Broken flowers as well as grass.
In front of the forest in a valley
Tandaradei!
Sweetly sang the nightingale.

I wandered
To the field;
Thither was my beloved come.
There was I so taken,—
Blessed Lady!
That I shall evermore be happy.
Did he kiss me? O, a thousand times!
Tandaradei!
See how red my mouth is!

There had he made
So rich
A bed of flowers;
Had anyone come by,
Inwardly
He would have laughed,
Since among the roses he might well
Tandaradei!
Have marked where my head had lain.

That he was there by my side
If any were to know,
(God forbid it!) I might be shamed.
What there befell
No one knows
But he himself and I
And one little bird,—
Tandaradei!
And she may well be trusted.[1]

The innocent sweetness of these lines reaches at one bound the absolute perfection of such writing. In our own rich poetic literature we have equalled, but none could excel, its divine simplicity and purity. In Germany it remains without a rival in its own peculiar class, the finest songs of Mörike coming closest, perhaps, to it. The genius of the folk-song was never more exquisitely wedded to the art of accomplished verse. Among characteristics that Walther owes to his reverent study of the volks-lied, may be mentioned his manner of contemplating the seasons, and their natural phenomena. Spring is his favourite time, and he is divided between the joyous excitement of seeing the flowers break through the snow,—delicate reminiscence, perhaps, of the gentians on his own Tyrolese mountain sides,—and the still contentment of May, the month of blossoms, that links

[1] Appendix GG.

spring with summer. He has his flower of flowers; the heather is to him what the daisy was to Chaucer. His songs are full of references to the tender beauty of the rose-red bells that bud and break out of the dark green sprays. He is never tired of this one flower; when he is ill and like to die in winter, it is the sight of the heather in bloom that brings back to him the desire to live. Some of his images give the heather a sweet significance; in one minne-lied he says: 'The heather blushes red in spring to see how green the forest is growing, so sorrow is ashamed at sight of joy.' But it is not the simple flower of the wilds that can bewitch him in his excitable moments. Then the forest must receive him in its murmurous depths, to wander there till the poet's mood of restlessness is over. 'I love the heather with all its manifold colours, but I love the forest better still, for within it there are many wonderful things.' But for the winter he spares his hatred. Few men have said more petulant things about the winter-time than Walther. The first line of the first poem in the collected edition of his works reads: 'The winter has done us all manner of harm: heather and forest have both lost their colour, but many a voice will soon sound sweetly there again. As soon as I see the maidens playing at ball in the streets, then I know it is time to hear the birds again. Would that I might sleep away all the hours of winter! for watching and waiting, I grow angry that its power should spread so far and wide. God knows it must soon give place to May, and then we shall have flowers again where now we have frost.' In another early poem he says: 'I am grown as uncouth as Esau, my smooth hair has become all rough (with winter cold). Sweet summer,

where art thou? I long to see how the fields lie once more. Rather than go on suffering as I am doing now, I would go and be a monk at Toberlû.' Toberlû being, it seems, an excessively bleak and dreary Cistercian monastery in Westphalia. Once only does he speak well of winter. That one good word is to be found in the latest group of his 'minne-lieder,' where at last the obdurate lady of his love has rewarded his patient passion with a declaration of her submission. That first winter of bliss cannot be denounced as winters in general are. He blames the days for being so short, but satisfies himself with this true lover's philosophy:—

If the winter days be brief,
Longer last the winter nights;
Loved and lover find relief,
Rest and bliss in love's delights.
What have I said? Woe's me! in silence best
Such rapture were confessed.[1]

There is one exquisite 'tagslied' or 'aubade' as the French would call it, song of dawn and awakening, in which the Juliet finds a thousand plausible reasons why her Romeo should take no heed of the day-star that shines out of the grey sky in testimony of the approach of morning. Fresh as dew or a newly opened flower, such poems as these, perfumed with gaiety, chivalry and romance, come down to us with the first principles of love and poesy upon their innocent rhythms. In the originality and beauty of his 'tagslieder,' however, Walther does not equal Wolfram von Eschenbach, whose amorous 'sentinel-songs' are the most exquisite German imitations of the Provençal 'alba,' of the origin and purpose of which Dr. Hueffer gives a full account in his valuable work on the Troubadours. These

[1] Appendix HH.

earliest lispings of the vernacular are naïve with the simplicity not so much of a child as of some adult creature newly gifted with a voice, some Dryad or Oread just cumbered with humanity. Their sweetness is primitive and unaffected, and we listen to them with surprise to find the things they tell us so familiar and yet so freshly put. The Middle High German, too, has a dreamy dignity about it that is lacking in the German of to-day; there are none of the harsh labial compounds that grate upon the ear, and mar so much of the melody even of Goethe and Heine; there is none of the garrulous flatness that mars its other child, the otherwise rich and graceful tongue of modern Holland. It is inherently, in all its distinction and its imperfection, the language of romance, as old French is *par excellence* the language of chivalry

All this while we have said nothing about the class of his poems for which Walther was most admired by his contemporaries, and in which they took most interest, the 'minne-lieder.' Criticism loves above all things to linger around the peculiarities and individualities of a character, and shrinks from the needful task of considering its uniformities. Minne-singing was the fashion of the time, and of Walther himself we learn least from the love-songs. Yet, considered simply as poetry, and as the culmination of an interesting literature, they are worthy of our careful attention. The relative position of a poet and his mistress, of any knight and his liege lady, was but recently defined by the fantastic laws of chivalry. The elaborate system of gallantry that was instituted in the South of France, and out of which there gradually developed a passion for amorous litigation which was never equalled for frivolity before or

since, had not penetrated as far as Germany. A simpler, sweeter fashion prevailed among the patrons of the minnesingers, and the new discovery of the lofty worth of woman was pushed to no foolish excess of affectation. It seems to have been customary for every minstrel who felt in himself a calling to sing of love, to choose a mistress to whom to pour out his ardour and his melancholy. Considering the roughness of the times, it is very singular that the ordinary tone of the verses produced should be so reticent, so delicate as it is. These are the words in which Walther first introduces us to the lady of his love:—'When the flowers are springing out of the grass, laughing up at the wanton sun, in a May morning early, and the little birds are singing in the very best way they can, what can be likened to that? It is well-nigh heaven itself. Should we say what it likens, I could have said what I have seen much better, and I would say so still, could I only see that glorious sight again. It was where a noble, beautiful, pure woman, well robed and well adorned, went in company with many folk, with lofty bearing and not alone, looking slowly around her from time to time, going as the sun goeth among the stars. Let May bring us all its wonders, what has it so wonderfully sweet as this her lovely body? We let all the flowers stand waiting, and gaze upon this perfect woman.'

We are forcibly reminded in this beautiful description of Walther's first sight of his mistress of the passage in the 'Vita Nuova,' where Dante sees Beatrice among the other fair Florentine girls, outshining them all. There is a grace in the picture that recalls the slim maidens of some early Tuscan procession, in attendance on a queen who easily surpasses them in dignity and beauty. Presently

the first awe of the stricken senses gives way to passion that exalts and excites the imagination, and in the next poem his hands are longing to adorn her. In language at once ardent and reverent, he declares that her simple robes should be set off with chains of jewels, and since he is poor and cannot buy these, he will throw about her garlands of red and white flowers that have sprung in forest depths to the sound of the singing of birds. He flies to the woodlands to get these chaplets for her, and in the leafy solitude he makes bold to tell us how he declared his love for her to herself. It was underneath a blossoming tree that he told her, and the air so shivered with his passion that the petals were loosed from the boughs and fell in a soft rain at their feet. In his next song he is less rapturous. It is the beauty and goodness of his dear lady that have bewitched him, and her red mouth that laughs so sweetly; and his own diction, as he says so, is so felicitous and bright, that we think of Heine in his few joyous 'Lieder.' Presently we learn that some great national disaster has fallen upon Germany; but Walther can hardly refrain from singing, for he is thinking of his mistress. He is like a happy child forced to attend a funeral, who is chided for an involuntary peal of laughter. But a sadder tone comes in, a chord of apprehension jarring on the joyful music. His lady holds aloof, and while permitting him to be her declared servant, will grant him no favour, and pronounce no word of comfort. The rapture gives way to a strain of exquisitely gracious supplication. 'If thou art indifferent to me I know not. I love thee! This one thing is hard to bear. Thou lookest past me and over me. I cannot bear this my burden of love alone. If thou wilt only deign to share

it, I can easily bear it.' There is something extremely genuine and pathetic in this broken cry of hope deferred, and the simple confession that it is very hard to be unable to fix her look a moment, that she will 'look past me and over me.' We seem suddenly brought face to face, pulse to pulse, with the living man in such a natural ejaculation of wounded love and vanity as this. In the next poem we learn something of the proud lady's station. 'Hêrzeliebez Frouwelîn,' he says, 'heart-beloved maiden, many blame me that I love one so poor as thou art and of so low estate. This I bear as I have borne, as I will ever bear; thou art beautiful, and thou art rich enough for me. I would not give the glass ring round thy finger for a queen's gold.' The next song lends itself so kindly to our English, that we cannot refrain from giving one stanza in verse:—

God of her face had great delight:
  He spread such precious colours there,
So purely red, so purely white,
  Here rosy-flushed, there lily-fair:
O, I would see her gladlier far,—
  Dared I to say so without sinning,—
Than heaven or heaven's bright chariot-star:
  Poor fool, is this thy praise-beginning?
For if I lift my words so high
The trespass of my mouth may make my heart to sigh.[1]

Whereupon he melts into a reverie about her lips, so ripely red for kissing, and wonders if he shall ever win them for his own; the whole somewhat unusually amorous strain being accounted for in some measure by the last stanza, in which we learn how he fainted, wounded by her loveliness, as, himself unseen, a wild-wood Actæon, he watched her rising naked from her woodland bath. We also, glancing for a

[1] Appendix II.

moment, may in fancy see some such substantial figure, flecked with leaf-shadows, and unabashed, as was made immortal three hundred years afterwards in Albrecht Dürer's glorious engraving of the Adam and Eve, that beatification of the Teutonic Venus.

At this point we meet with the first of those invectives against 'my lady Fortune,' 'Frou Sælde,' which become so common. He begins to feel his lack of wealth and his uncertain position very irksome and painful, and he blames Fortune for his ill-luck with his mistress, who in spite of all is still 'not dear, or very dear, but the dearest of all.' It furthermore appears that the object of his affections is not known to the world; it was a kind of duty with sensitive lovers to conceal their lady's name, and he complains that people flock round him, and tease him to tell them. But he will give way at last, and let them know. This lady, then, has two names—the one of them is Grace, but the other is Churlishness; and so he leaves them as wise as they were before. There follows then a declaration couched in words of the most modern tone and feeling. He tells us that a man of honour, a knight, a gentleman in fact, should respect all women, but should keep his deepest reverence for the best. Not those, necessarily, which have the most beauty, for beauty is but an adornment of goodness; and then, confessing that his mistress treats him ill, yet he cannot regret being a servant of love, for he says that a man knows no more than a child what life means if he never loved a woman. Next we have a charming pastoral vignette. He is sitting in the fields, and meditating on his love; he determines to try the oracle. So he takes a long stalk of knot-grass, and pulls it asunder, joint by joint

as children do, to see if she will love him or love him not. He begs us 'do not laugh!' for the answer is favourable, and he is so hopeless that even that affords him some little consolation. Presently we find him, in true Renaissance spirit, kneeling in supplication to 'Frouwe Minne,' Venus, our Lady of Love, that she will shoot an arrow into the hard heart of his mistress. It is difficult to imagine how it was possible that these long-winged interchanges of homage and disdain, to prosecute which

> Men must have had eternal youth,—
> Or nothing else to do,

as Mr. Austin Dobson flippantly but pertinently says, could be pursued without much ennui. The sense of the ridiculous was very slightly developed in the early mediæval times, many proofs of which might be adduced from Walther's poems, and from none more than the next we come to among the 'minnelieder,' which I translate as being at the same time very short and a curiosity in subject and metre:—

> Queen Fortune throws her gifts around,
> But turns her back on wretched me;
> No place for pity hath she found,
> And what to do I cannot see;
> To me to turn she will not deign,
> And if I run around, I find her turned again.
> She pleases not to see me ever,
> I would her eyes stood in her neck, so must she see me then for all her wild endeavour.[1]

The abnormal length of the last line is of not unfrequent occurrence in these poems, and points to some peculiarity in the melody to which they were sung, for in all cases the

[1] Appendix JJ.

metre was arranged to suit the tune, not the tune composed for the words.

A fresh group of more humoristic 'minnelieder' opens with a whimsical piece of petulance direct against his lady. All her honour comes from having so great a poet to sing her glory, and if she will not favour him he will sing no more, and her fame will be forgotten. Then with a curious impetuous outburst that is half-comic, half-savage, he hopes that if she refuses him, and takes a young man when she is gray, that her lusty husband may revenge her first poet-lover by ill-treating her, and by whipping her old hide with summer saplings. The next is more fantastic still, full of curses on the winter, queer jokes about the ill-fortune of hearing the ass and the cuckoo on an empty stomach, and ends up by addressing his mistress as Hiltegunde. It has been supposed from this that that was her name; but, on the whole, considering the etiquette of the times, which, as we have seen, forbad a knight to reveal his lady's name, it is more likely that it is a play on his own name in connection with the popular romance of 'Walther and Hildegunde.' A little later we are assured that the Emperor, probably poor young Heinrich VI., presently about to die in Sicily, would gladly turn music-maker for a kiss of her red lips. Passing one or two similarly conventional lyrics, we come to one song of a far fresher kind, one that made Walther famous at once, and which ought to endear his name and memory to every German, the first clear note of high patriotic unity, a hymn in praise of Germany and German beauty. One verse in particular has often been quoted by modern critics as curiously anticipating the famous national song

'Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland?' of Ernst Moriz Arndt:—

From Elbe river to the Rhine,
And back again all round to Hungary,
'Tis the best, this land of mine;
The best of all the world, it seems to me.
If I can judge what's fair,
In body or in face,
So help me God, no ladies have such grace
As German women bear.[1]

Whether this declaration of public feeling softened his Hiltegunde's heart or not, at all events we find him soon on terms of familiarity with her, called by her 'frîunt' and 'gesëlle' (lover and comrade), and calling her in return 'frîundîn' and 'frouwe mîn' (darling and wife). With this song and with that quoted above, in which, for her sake, he forgives the winter, the series of 'minnelieder' closes.

The verses of his later days breathe a spirit of morbid and petulant melancholy that is very sad to meet. He lived long enough to see the decline of art, and to hear the cry that poetry was dead. Walther deplores with much bitterness the loss of courtly popularity. The world whom he has served and still would serve has left him, he tells us, to listen to young fools. The garlands of the world have missed him, and the blossoms faded; the very roses have fallen apart and left only thorns. Virtue has lost its power, beauty its magic, in these sad days. In short, he mourns, like Asaph of old, that the wicked should flourish as a green bay-tree, while he is poor and an outcast. In one of these later poems, however, we come upon a single example of a brighter mood. It begins with the old depression. He is in utter despair;

[1] Appendix KK.

life is not worth living; all men do evil, and that is the fault of the women. So far all is gloomy, but at the mention of the last word he pauses, and reproves himself for speaking evil of women. He has no right to carp at others because life is dark to him, and the piece ends by his saying, 'Then I will live as best I may, and give out my song.' But he is soon as miserable as ever. Love likes the stalwart limbs of young Four-and-twenty better than the wise bald head of Three-score. The Lady of Love has gone crazed after young fools, and heeds not him nor his songs. Art is at a low ebb, morality is dead, and at last he says farewell to the world altogether.

There is little pleasure in following him through this period of morbid and atrabilious discontent, a Byronic disease of the mind far enough removed from that melancholy of Leopardi or Shelley, which is deeply poetic in spite of its weakness. We lose in it all trace of the joyous singer who had been unable, in his youth, to lead off even a piece of juggling nonsense about a crow and an old woman, without a prelude of such bubbling Chaucerian sweetness as this:—

When summer came to pass,
And blossoms through the grass
Were wonderfully springing,
And all the birds were singing,
I came through sun and shadow
Along a mighty meadow,
In midst of which a fountain sprang,
Before a woodland wild, that rang
With songs the nightingale outsang.[1]

We have seen that he awoke from this intellectual paralysis which was creeping over him, under the excite-

[1] Appendix LL.

ment of the pietistic revival, and wrote some superb fresh sacred lyrics under the personal influence of St. Elizabeth of Hungary. We have seen, too, that the rousing of the embers was but a flash, and that the end was near. The life of trouble was to find rest in the cloistered silence of Würzburg. Thus we have traced the man and the poet through his life and his work to the same point of conclusion.

A DUTCH POETESS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

In one of the precious portfolios of the Fodor Museum in Amsterdam, there exists a drawing the interest of which, to the literary student, far overbalances that of the heads of old women and groups of old armour with which it is associated. It is a study in sanguine, by Goltzius, and it represents a young Dutch lady of the time of Shakespeare. The face is viewed almost in profile; the soft hair—golden blond, as we know from other sources—is drawn tightly back from a forehead of most virginal sweetness, and is enclosed in a lace coif; large dark eyes, partly concealed by somewhat heavy eyelids, and softened by long lashes; a straight nose, finely cut, with resolute and even passionate nostrils; a mouth exquisitely curved; and a small firm chin, compose a countenance in which intelligence and strength of purpose combine with an unusual beauty. The modest diffidence of the upper part of this face is belied by the resolution of the lower part, and we recognise that sweetest paradox of excellent womanhood, the tenderness that is at once wise and strong, the will that knows how, with equal simplicity, to rule or to be ruled. The drawing was made about the year 1614, and it is the portrait, at

the age of twenty, of Tesselschade Visscher, the most renowned of Dutch poetesses.

Before we enter upon the study of that particular period which is to be the subject of this chapter, it may be well to regard very briefly the literary and political events which led up to it. The phrase, 'Chamber of Rhetoric,' will be frequently mentioned in the course of these pages, and I may at the outset describe the peculiar institution thus referred to. It was under the Dukes of Burgundy and during the last years of the fourteenth century that literary guilds began to be formed in the Low Countries, under the title of 'Kamers van Rhetorica,' or Chambers of Rhetoric. For more than two centuries all literary enterprise was protected and conducted by these semi-official bodies, the existence of which was not confined to the large cities, but marked the prosperity and public spirit of even such unimportant towns as Zierikzee and Schiedam. It was the privilege of these Chambers to encourage the composition of sacred poems, of scholastic prose treatises, and, most of all, of moralities and dramatic mysteries. As the course of events progressed, first the Renaissance, and secondly, the Reformation, coloured the exercises of the Chambers, and in due time destroyed them. But before this last could happen, a kind of didactic humanism had taken the place of the study of Thomas Aquinas. There was really little vitality in the constitution of the Chambers. The 'brothers,' as the members were called, discussed, analysed, spun out their endless threads of argument, without much result in science or literature. Under their hands the language became gradually debased, until it threatened to sink into a kind of bastard French. Flanders,

in the early part of the fifteenth century, enjoyed a certain fallacious revival in the hands of Houwaert, a man equally illustrious as poet and statesman, who stirred the Chamber of the 'Garland of Mary,' at Brussels, into a sort of frenzy with his pseudo-classical dramas of 'Narcissus and Echo,' 'Leander and Hero,' and the like. But this proved to be a false start. Houwaert had no true conception of the dignity of antique art; and, moreover, the language he wrote in was deformed by all the worst barbarisms of the Burgundian school. Cornelis van Ghistele was but a little more successful with the Chamber of the 'Marigold,' at Antwerp, for though he approached somewhat nearer to the sources of antiquity, he did nothing to purify the debased and nerveless language. Meanwhile, the first great writer of the Netherlands had arisen in Antwerp, actually outside the blazing petals of the 'Marigold.' This was the poetess Anna Bijns, perhaps the only woman whose writing, apart from her personal influence, has effected a great change in any epoch of letters. From this time the omnipotence of the Chambers, having been questioned, was ripe to pass away. The struggle with Spain, and the victory of the Northern Provinces, removed the head of intellectual as of commercial enterprise from Antwerp to Amsterdam, but not before it had called forth in the Southern Provinces the quickening genius of Filips van Marnix, Lord of Saint Aldegonde, one of those brilliant and penetrating minds which seem to be produced only in the most critical moments of history. In the plastic hands of Marnix the Dutch language regained its vigour and much of its purity, and became a fit channel for national and patriotic thoughts, while his 'Wilhelmuslied,' a ballad in honour of William

of Orange, nobly heralded the independence, and has remained for three hundred years the one great popular poem of Holland. To return, however, to the Chambers of Rhetoric. We are particularly concerned with one of those institutions, the Amsterdam Chamber of the 'Eglantine,' which was founded in 1496, and which took for its motto the words, 'In Liefde Bloeyende'—'Blossoming in Love.' In process of time the full title of the Chamber was merged in the phrase, 'The Brothers Blossoming in Love.' This body played no important part until the war with Spain; it failed to compete with its southern brethren; but as soon as Amsterdam began to enjoy the privileges of Protestant freedom, that is to say, from the year 1578, the Eglantine took a foremost place in Dutch culture, and the last fifty years of its existence were years of prolonged triumph. About 1585 Amsterdam was enriched by the arrival of a great number of fugitives from Flanders and Brabant, who brought their wealth and energy to the new market of Holland; and at the same time there arrived two of the literary guilds of Antwerp, the 'White Lavender Bloom,' and the 'Fig-tree.' From this time forth the Eglantine became known as the Old Chamber, and its character underwent an important modification. While the exiles from the south retained their cut-and-dried traditions, their conventional forms, their tiresome Burgundian phrases, the Brothers of the Old Chamber, among whom were counted the noblest and most intelligent citizens of Amsterdam, set themselves to reform the language and enrich the literature of the new-born state. The creation of a national poetry and a national art was exactly coeval with the creation of a national constitution.

As Holland attained independence with a sudden heroic effort that nothing could withstand, so, with the same rapid decision, she formed for herself, in a single generation, a great literature. In this work, three men, intimate friends, citizens of Amsterdam, had the main honour of initiation: one of them was the father of our poetess. They were immediately followed by a group of the most elevated and original minds that Holland has produced; and in this greater generation our poetess herself formed the central point around which all the best genius of the time revolved, obeying the irresistible attraction of beauty and sympathy. Hence a full biography of father and daughter would embrace the whole history of the rise and glory of letters during the short period that they flourished eminently in the Netherlands. Such a copious study would be impossible within our limits, but it will perhaps be within our scope, while never losing sight of the central figure, to contemplate, in some degree, the whole movement of Dutch literature from 1580 to 1670, the extreme limits of its efflorescence.

Tesselschade was the third and youngest daughter of the poet and rhetorician Roemer Visscher. Her name was typical of the ingenious tastelessness of the age, a quality that we find, like a stain, pervading the whole literature of Europe in the end of the sixteenth century. The name signifies Texel-wreck, and the young lady received this extraordinary title because her father, returning from some voyage, was wrecked off the Texel, at the mouth of the Zuyder Zee, on the day of her birth, March 25, 1594. Her father himself had a punning name, for 'Roemer' sig-

nifies a goblet or cup, and his contemporaries indulged, of course, in endless pleasantries on so pliable a text. Roemer Visscher was born in 1545; the Independence found him a middle-aged man of wealth and position, a Catholic indeed, but wholly devoted to the State, and with an enthusiasm for letters which overpowered all other considerations. He had plenty of leisure, and he had employed his earlier years in a course of study then very unusual in the north of Europe. For while devouring the classics with all the passion for which Leyden had so long been famous, he did not, like the scholars of that famous university, attempt the vain task of competing with the ancients in their own tongues, but determined to use them as models for the exaltation of the vernacular into a classic language. In this great idea he consciously followed the example of Joachim du Bellay, whose 'Défense et Illustration,' published when they were children, formed the text-book of the Humanists of Amsterdam. In the labour he undertook, Roemer possessed a great advantage in being one of the two Presidents of the Chamber of the Eglantine; and another in having for his colleague his bosom friend Hendrick Spieghel, a man entirely like-minded with himself. A third agent in the work of this renaissance was Coornhert, a much older, and in some respects less genial and fascinating person than Spieghel or Roemer, but a great reformer of language, and a prosaist of considerable genius. A didactic humanism, Cicero strongly tinctured with the Bible, formed the starting point of the polemical philosophy of Coornhert; the Old Chamber, under the guidance of the younger men, stood more aloof from religion, gave a warmer tinge to thought, and formed an element in

which the imagination could move comparatively unshackled by conventional disabilities. It was their great glory to have purified the language, to have thrown away the rubbish of the Rhetoricians, and to have restored, in modern form, the nervous language of Maerlant and Boendale, the great mediæval writers of 'Dietsch' or early Dutch. In this revival, it should be repeated, the Brothers Blossoming in Love took at first a solitary part, and to their two Presidents is due the chief honour of the movement. Spieghel, a wealthy merchant, was a more active, less contemplative character than Roemer. Born in 1549, he was slightly younger than his friend, but he seems at first to have taken the lead in literature. Just outside the Utrecht gate of Amsterdam, stood Meerhuyzen, his beautiful villa, in the garden of which, among the boughs of a great old linden, he built a summer-house, which he named the Muses' Tower-court. In this hanging house among the leaves he received a few select friends, and it became the first Dutch salon. Called to the highest honours of the Republic, he preferred to pay one heavy fine after another rather than to disturb his study, and imperil the progress of literary reform. As early as 1584, he published his famous 'Twaespraek,' a prose treatise founded on the model of Du Bellay's, in which he advocated, in the form of a dialogue held in his linden tree between Roemer Visscher and Gedeon Fallett, the necessity of purifying Dutch literature by a tasteful study of the classics, and in which he lays down, for the first time, the principles of prose style. This book was introduced by a preface from the hand of Coornhert, and was in fact a manifesto from all the leaders of reform. We may safely take this date—

1584—as the commencement of the great age of Dutch letters.

We can easily mark the decline of genius, but we know nothing of its rise until it stands before us adult. There seemed, between 1585 and 1605, to be but little practical result of the labours of Roemer and Spieghel. The great poets of the next generation, all born soon after the earlier date, were fast growing towards maturity in the warm air of freedom and revival. Although the two Presidents of the Old Chamber did not print their poems till the last years of their lives, their pieces were circulated from hand to hand, and their teaching was widely received. Such books as 'Den Pyl der Liefden,' (Love's Arrow), by Arnoldus Cobbault, full of allusions to Venus and Adonis, Panchaian odours, and the progress of Bacchus, pointed the way though without original talent, exactly as the poems of our own Groves and Watsons did. But the first real luminary that rose into the heavens, thus purged of mist by the leaders of the Old Chamber, was a young man destined to become the most influential, if not precisely the greatest, of all Dutch men of letters. Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft was the only poet of the great period, who in after years could remember the meetings among the boughs at Meerhuyzen. Born in 1581, he was admitted as a boy of seventeen into the Chamber of the Eglantine, of which his father, for a long time Burgomaster of Amsterdam, was an enlightened and prominent member. The introduction of entire equality among the citizens of the great Dutch cities produced, as it had done in Florence in the fourteenth century, a merchant aristocracy, which the presence of a great national danger chastened and preserved from vulgar

excess. The glory of the new commonwealth was its merchant class, with their wide government of the sea. The fall of Antwerp had been the rise of Amsterdam, and this was entirely owing to the immense impetus given to mercantile enterprise. In spite of the exhaustion of the struggle for independence, the wealth of the United Provinces was practically unbounded, and the centre of this prosperity was Amsterdam. The courts that encouraged art and literature had no counterparts in Holland; no member of the House of Orange had the opportunity of becoming a Mæcenas, except Frederick Henry, and he too late to modify the course of events. Consequently it was left to the wealthy merchants to organise and direct intellectual effort, and under their genial protection the fine arts flourished freely, in accordance with the temper of the nation. The elder Hooft was a typical merchant prince, and it was natural that the son of such a man, being dowered with genius, should know how to cultivate his gifts in the way most advantageous to himself, and to his country. Hooft had the intelligence to import, even in his boyish days, a new element into literature. Hitherto the Dutch Humanism had been essentially didactic. Spieghel read Plato in the original, and felt a little the Greek sense of delight in thought for its own sake, but he was alone in both these attainments. The Renaissance had come to Holland to teach, and not to enjoy; the great Latinists of Leyden, though they had produced a Joannes Secundus to their wounding, and a Lotichius to their hurt, had mainly asserted a Ciceronian stoicism in which there was no tincture of the southern delight in luxury and physical beauty. Already in Hooft's boyish tragedy of 'Achilles

and Polyxena,' performed before the Old Chamber in 1598, in spite of the inspiration drawn rather from Seneca than Homer, in spite of the thinness of plot and the poverty of language, a more truly Greek conception of poetry is recognisable than in any previous Dutch poem. The chorus (act ii. scene 4) beginning—

The heaven with its halls of cloth of gold,

alone appears to me to protest against the neglect Dutch critics have shown to this dull and puerile but most important drama, and to foreshadow plainly enough the richness and melody of Hooft's later style. In his eighteenth year, flushed with success and ambition, with unlimited means at his disposal, attended by all the charms that wealth, beauty, and vivacity can give, the fortunate young poet started on a three years' tour through France, Italy, and Germany. Italy was the land of his dreams; he arrived too late to press the dying hand of Tasso, but not too late, it would appear, to pour a florid worship at the feet of Guarini. He recorded his adventures, such as seeing the dead body of Gabrielle d'Estrée sitting up in a white satin mantle six hours after her decease, and other remarkable exhibitions, in a highly entertaining note-book, which has been published in our own time. But it is more to our purpose that from Florence, in 1600, he addressed a letter in rhyme to the Old Chamber, which marks an epoch in Dutch verse, so excellent is it. In 1601 he came back to Holland with a splendid pair of moustaches and one finished drama. The latter was the 'Theseus and Ariadne,' a boyish affair, even worse than the 'Achilles.'

Hooft returned, to find the household at Meerhuyzen broken up. Spieghel, persuaded by his second wife, abandoned the Muses' Tower-court in 1602, and proceeded to Alkmaar, now a red-roofed dreamy town, as clean and as empty as a scoured pan, but then a great mercantile centre and the capital of North Holland. But the literary circle was not broken up; the members merely transferred their rendezvous to the house of Roemer Visscher, on the Cingel, just outside the city of Amsterdam, on the way to Haarlem. In 1602 the family consisted of his wife Aafge, of whom we know next to nothing, and of his three daughters. Of these, Anna, the eldest, was a comely, intelligent girl of eighteen, Truitjen (or Gertrude) six years younger, and Tesselschade, a sweet little person of eight. It was probably at this time, and during the next three years, that these young ladies laid up the stock of accomplishments which formed in after life the wonder of their contemporaries. Speaking of the time before he set out for Constantinople in 1612, Ernestus Brink of Harderwijk wrote:—

> Roemer Visscher had three daughters, all of whom were practised in very sweet accomplishments; they could play music, paint, write and engrave on glass, make poems, cut emblems, embroider all manner of fabrics, and swim well, which last thing they had learned in their father's garden, where there was a canal with water outside the city.

It will be noticed that the curriculum of their studies was a very healthy and practical one. The blue-stockings of the day, like Anna Maria van Schurman, talked Greek and wrote Arabic, and were prigs of the most appalling intensity; but the daughters of Roemer Visscher, though

possessing the finest feminine intellects of their age, could not even read Latin. They were early instructed in their father's love of his mother-tongue, and of the fine arts, and they inherited no small measure of his admirable good sense. Throughout life nothing was more remarkable in the characters of Anna and Tesselschade that, though habitually covered with the most fulsome adulation from all the most eminent men of their age, they never forgot to be sensible, discreet, and modest. Such was the home and such the feminine adornments of the house of Roemer Visscher. Coornhert had died in 1590; Spieghel was gone to Alkmaar; Roemer himself was verging on sixty, and his chief friends, the elder Hooft and the elder Reael, were old men too. In this company Pieter Hooft, with his Italianated manners, his moustaches and his poetic ardour, must have produced a fine impression of youthfulness. One of the first things he did was to fall in love with the staid Anna, who rejected him with a gentle courtesy; then with two nieces of Spieghel, who died one after the other, and finally with the famous lute-player, the fair Christina van Erp. But this is taking us too far ahead; we must pause at the year 1605, in which Roemer moved to the house which was for so many years the nursery of genius, and Hooft first proved himself to be a great poet.

The family of Roemer left their home on the Cingel and took up their abode on the English quay, now known as the Geldersche Kaai, quite in the middle of Amsterdam. There is a charming engraving in Brederoô's 'Lied-boek,' which may very likely, I think, be a portrait of the house. A broad street, paved with 'klinkers' or rounded bricks, lies between it and the water; a carved metal railing pro-

tects the lower windows, which are themselves provided with delicate screens in ironwork. A long knocker decorates the stout oak door, with its elaborate lintel, on which hangs the escutcheon of the family. It is a red-brick house, with lattice windows. There is a tree in front of it, and a courtyard beside it; and if you would know how cool and clean and sunny it is within, you must refer to the pictures of Mijnheer Pieter de Hooghe. There are effects of sunlight and colour to be found there on summer evenings such as Van der Meer, of all men who ever lived, was alone worthy to paint, but we must not fancy that the daughters of the house appreciated them with all the intensity of the generation that followed. The Italian fashion was supreme in art as in poetry, and there still were memories of the young men who went to Rome with Bernard van Orley to study in the school of Raphael. This Italianating spirit was not lessened, we may be sure, by the next step taken by the ambitious Hooft. In 1605, the year that Roemer moved into the city, the Brothers Blossoming in Love were invited to witness the performance of a pastoral drama by their youthful colleague, a work unprecedented in Dutch history. It is not supprising that 'Granida,' as it was called, excited great notice. From the first verse that the shepherdess Dorilea utters we see how fresh and new a poem this is, and how great was the advance that Hooft had achieved. Pastorals are not now in fashion; it is unfortunate, for a good dramatic idyl is a lovely piece of art. 'Granida' has almost every requisite of this kind of writing; it is varied and lyrical, sufficiently interesting as a story, amorous and gracious, with a spice of passion, and written in luxurious

richly-rhymed verse that is music itself. Compared with our own 'Faithful Shepherdess,' it is a little stiff in form, the Italian model being more closely imitated, and when we read it carefully we find whole passages of the 'Pastor Fido' bodily paraphrased. But there was no law in those days against the sin of plagiarism, and the unconscious offender errs very gracefully. This delicate, artificial poetry was not to set root in Holland; its days were already numbered, but in Hooft, as in Spenser of whom he constantly reminds us, the love of the French and Italian poets outweighed for a little while the temper of the nation, and produced a brief semblance of the Golden Age. Moreover, the daughters of Roemer, with whom Hooft's unlucky suit to Anna had wrought no severance of friendship, were deeply impressed with it, Tesselschade especially, as her early poems prove.

At the English Quay the life at first was very quiet. It is not probable that the house of Roemer was conscious of the fact that close by, in Warmoesstraat, a seller of stockings died in 1608, leaving a young son of twenty-one, Joost van den Vondel, in good time to be the intimate companion of Tesselschade and Anna, and himself the greatest of Dutch writers. Still less are the ladies likely to have heard of the arrival, in 1607, at Amsterdam, of an English family exiled as Brownists by the bigotry of James I., and bringing with them their son, Jan Janssen Starter, a boy of thirteen, soon to become an exquisite lyrical poet. They were more interested in certain family matters that gave colouring to the year 1609, when their sister Triutjen, who did not share their literary proclivities, married a rich brewer, Nikolaas van Buyl, afterwards promoted to be

sheriff of the city. He belonged to the Reformed Church, and thus Gertrude passed out of the circle of her family's interests; accordingly, we meet with her name no more. It was in the same year that a young man of twenty-six, one of the handsomest and most capable persons of that stirring time, Laurens Reael, was marked out for honours by the great Oldenbarneveldt, and a still greater distinction was accorded to a dearer friend by the Stadtholder. The influence of the family of Hooft with the house of Nassau was very great, and the brilliant gifts of young Pieter Corneliszoon were not unnoticed by Maurice. In 1609, the bailiff of the castle of Muiden, Willem van Zuijlen van Nijevelt, died, and was succeeded by the author of 'Granida' with the titles and emoluments of bailiff of Muiden, steward of Gooiland, and master of the town and lands of Weesp. This appointment was one of the richest and most desirable in the gift of the Stadtholder; it gave the possessor rank among the highest dignitaries of the country, and assured him more than competence. From this moment Hooft lived at Muiden Castle, on the river Vecht, about ten miles east of Amsterdam.

The mother of our three sisters died soon after her second daughter's marriage, and in 1610 we find Anna head of the household at Engelsche Kaai, and dividing her care between her ageing father, and the sixteen-year-old Tesselschade, now fast developing into an acknowledged beauty. Soon came the news that Hooft had won the hand of Christina van Erp, and had brought her to share the dignities of Muiden. It was probably in the same year that the sisters became acquainted with Vondel, who had just married, at the age of twenty-three. Some influence,

now unknown to us, united the family of Roemer with the great Latinists of Leyden, particularly with Heinsius, who we find henceforward as a faithful admirer of Anna and warm friend of the others. Thus the circle was enlarging, and one by one those great figures were gathering round the unfolding charms of Tesselschade, ready to greet with their sympathy the earliest emanations of her genius. In 1611 her father at least, and probably herself, became conscious of a youth over whom she was destined to exercise a very considerable influence. This was Gerbrand Adriaenszoon Brederoô, whose 'Roddrick and Alphonsus,' performed in that year, and dedicated to Hugo Grotius, revealed the existence of a new dramatic genius. Born in 1585, Brederoô was at this time of the same age as Anna, twenty-six, and a rough, fiery creature, in every way unlike the aristocratic Hooft. He was the son of a poor shoemaker of Amsterdam, a Protestant, and a stranger to the native refinements of the Roemer family; but genius was a key that could always unlock that hospitable door, and it was not long before he became an intimate visitor. In 1612, too, the young English exile, Jan Starter, became a member of the Old Chamber, and a friend of Roemer's daughters; a very different person he from the unpolished, ardent Brederoô, nor did he, a boy of seventeen, impress his personality on the circle as Brederoô did. The year 1612 was a memorable one in the annals of the Dutch drama. Brederoô produced two very important plays before the Old Chamber—his romantic tragi-comedy of 'Griane' and his broadly comic 'Farce of the Cow.' A new figure, that of the physician Dr. Samuel Coster, competed for dramatic honours with his farce of 'Teeuwis, the Boor;' Hooft came

forward with his noble historical tragedy of 'Geeraerdt van Velsen,' a story of early Dutch history from the times of Floris V., the scene of which is laid in the Castle of Muiden, Hooft's own home; and last, but not least, Vondel brought out the first of the magnificent series of his biblical dramas, 'Het Pascha,' or the Freeing of the Children of Israel from Egypt, in which, as in most of the writings of this exalted poet, a great national idea or aspiration is not far to seek below the surface of the story. This tragi-comedy was brought out, not by the Old Chamber, but by the Chamber of the White Lavender Blossom, one of the Brabant guilds settled in Amsterdam. It was simultaneously brought out, pirated perhaps, by the Chamber of the Red Rose at Schiedam. The success of the 'Pascha' was immediate; Vondel was invited to come over to the Eglantine, and from this time forward we find him a constant visitor at Roemer's house.

Among all these acquisitions there had been one loss. Oldenbarneveldt had noted, as I have said, the diplomatic and governing qualities in Laurens Reael, and had determined to take him away from the writing of poetry to a wider sphere. We need not regret it, for making verses was the worst thing this great man could do. In 1602 Holland had founded her East India Company, at a most happy moment, when the sceptre of Asia was falling from the enslaved hand of Portugal, and when Spain had proved herself incapable of lifting it again. The treasures of the Eastern Archipelago dropped into the grasp of Holland, and her merchants found a glorious new empire waiting for them under the spice trees of Banda and Amboyna. But government as well as energy, craft as well

as courage, were needed to regulate this new Eldorado. The keen glance of the Advocate surveyed the youth of Holland and selected Reael as the most capable person to be found. Accordingly, in 1611, that young man said farewell to his friends in Roemer's house, and set out, in his twenty-eighth year, in command of four ships of war for the Moluccas. No sooner had he reached his destination than he was appointed Governor of Ternate, the most precious of the Spice Settlements; and here, winning golden opinions, we leave him for the present.

At home in Amsterdam, Brederoô was no less rapidly rising into fame, though on the more peaceful scene of the stage. In 1613 he was made a Brother Blossoming in Love, and began, by his growing differences with the elder members, a split which finally proved the ruin of the Eglantine. To us, the most interesting thing is that he fell violently in love with Tesselschade, now an exquisite girl of nineteen, and that this passion tinged the first few years with hope and the rest of his life with despair. Among the poets of this time she had many admirers, but no other suitor, for Hooft, Vondel, and Coster were married, and in 1614 Starter left Amsterdam to settle at Leeuwarden, in Friesland, there to found a chamber of rhetoric in memory of his regretted Eglantine. Personally, there was much to recommend Brederoô to a young poetess like Tesselschade; his fervour, his indisputable genius, his passionate admiration of her wit and beauty, and his public acknowledgment of her great qualities; for in 1614 he dedicated to her by name his tragedy of 'Lucelle.' To her father, on the other hand, the somewhat disreputable son of a Protestant shoemaker, author of farces in which the decencies were not

successfully maintained, the poor adventurer of Helicon, was a very interesting visitor and guest, but not to be thought of as a son-in-law, and so the wooing went on without any obvious result. The dedication of 'Lucelle' is the earliest of the thousand-and-one tributes to Tesselschade. Brederoô entreats the 'amiable maiden' to enlighten his poor play 'with beams from those flashing stars that stand and sparkle in the heaven of her forehead.' He overwhelms her with thanks, ('O friend of books and all fair letters!') for having deigned to be present at the first performance; and already were the genius and beauty of this girl so eminent that he addresses her as 'the Honour of our City, the Glory of our Age.' He is charmed with the sympathy she showed for his heroine, clothing with the royal purple of pity the lily-white of her maidenly cheeks. It will be observed that the style of Brederoô was far from what we nowadays consider reticent, and no doubt his personal suit was carried on in a manner no less stormy. In the midst of these successes of the younger men, Spieghel had died, in 1612, and in 1614 Roemer Visscher determined to publish to the world his own poems and those of his old friend, neither of which had hitherto circulated except in MS. Accordingly, Spieghel's great masterpiece, the 'Hert Spieghel,' with its passing reference to its author's name, went through the press, and in the same year the 'Zinne-Poppen' and the 'Brabbelingh' of Roemer. These names, of which we may translate the first as 'Thought-Puppets', and the second as 'Scribblings,' were in some degree characteristic of the oddity of the contents. The 'Brabbelingh' consisted of erotic, comic, and epigrammatic pieces, very many of them translated from Catullus, Martial,

and Ovid. It was the pride of Roemer to be known among his contemporaries as the Dutch Martial; a modern critic might be more inclined to call him a Batavian Clément Marot. His original pieces are sprightly and earnest; without being exactly clumsy, he is seldom melodious or neatly turned. Both of his daughters seem to me to surpass him in the technical part of verse. The 'Zinne-Poppen' is a very delightful book, but it hardly comes under the category of poetry. It consists of nearly two hundred emblems, each illustrated by an engraving in the most charming style, with a motto above and a couplet below. This fills one page, and on the opposite is a short disquisition with the text as a motto. The first editions are extremely rare; I only know the third, of 1669, adorned with the improvements and additions of Anna. It has a pretty title-page, with a *roemer*, a coffee-pot, and a graceful jug, standing on a slab, again in punning reference to the author's name; and the engravings in the body of the book are works of delicate art.

The poems of Roemer and Spieghel were received with great respect, but the age, in its rapid development, had in fact already passed these forerunners of the revival. It was in the drama that the next few years produced the most brilliant successes. Brederoô presented before the Old Chamber in 1615 his 'Moortje,' an adaptation in verse of the 'Eunuchus' of Terence, which remained a popular stage-piece for eighty years, and Coster began a new style of performance with his 'Itys,' a most gruesome classical drama, in the manner of 'Titus Andronicus' or 'Hoffmann's Tragedy,' a thing of blood and rape, mitigated by passages of considerable romantic beauty. We find

here side by side the two main streams of dramatic art in Holland, the broad humour and farcical comicality of which Brederoô is the greatest exponent in poetry as Teniers in painting, and the coarse tragedy, dealing with violent effects and horrid crimes in which Coster excelled, or rather, perhaps, persisted. Coster belongs altogether to a lower rank of talent than Brederoô, whose life-like portraiture of 'humours,' less pedantic than Ben Jonson's, is infinitely laughter-compelling still; but Coster also had his comic side, and wrote farces which were quite as coarse if not so funny as his younger contemporary's. In spite, in fact, of his horrors, he was probably intended by nature to be a kind of bourgeois tragedian of the mild type of Heywood, of whom he frequently reminds us. It is strange to think that Tesselschade, a girl of distinguished rank in society, and in the flush of her youth, should be present at the performance of these wild plays, and should shower plaudits on their authors. It is more easy to imagine her seated in the theatre of the Brothers Blossoming in Love when her excellent friend Hooft brought out his great historical play of 'Baeto, or the Origin of the Dutchmen,' in 1616. Meanwhile the fussy energy of Coster had brought about dissension in the Chamber of the Eglantine, and finding it impossible to induce the old-fashioned Brothers to act with them, he and other modern spirits left the Chamber in 1617, and built in Amsterdam a wooden theatre, which they named the First Dutch Academy, or more generally Coster's Academy. It was an attempt to imitate the Academia della Crusca of Florence.

Suddenly the troubles of civil war threatened to break

on the Republic. From one end of the country to the other nothing was heard but the jarring clash of creeds, the endless squabbles of Gomarist and Arminian, and the growing jealousy of the heads of the State. Mr. Motley has given a graphic picture of this terrible storm of embittered religious opinions which broke upon the whole society of Holland; and no one would suspect, in reading his pages, that literature could flourish anywhere during that period. But Amsterdam possessed a partial immunity from the politico-theological scourge, and the house of Roemer, and the castle of Hooft were retired waters that scarcely felt the storm, or, feeling it, could still forget it. In 1618, however, the policy of the Counter-Remonstrants had become a burning question even in Amsterdam, and heated Calvinistic preachers, fulminating from their pulpits with all the rage, if not perhaps all the eloquence of Tertullian, succeeded in closing some of the theatres. In this very year, however, Prince Maurice commanded, and applauded, a performance of Hooft's 'Geraad van Velsen,' while Starter, away in Friesland, was unmolested in putting his 'Timbre van Cardone' on the stage. To the family of Roemer, with their mild Catholicism and their cultured humanism, these rabid shouts of Free Will and Predestination that deafened the consciences of men, and drove them to the foulest acts of tyranny and treason, must have seemed pitiful indeed; nor has Protestantism ever shone in so contemptible a light, as in these years preceding the murder of Oldenbarneveldt. A more intimate grief came to them in 1618, when Brederoô, worn out with exhaustion and disappointment, died in the arms of his poor old mother, in the same humble house where he

was born. Tesselschade had refused him, as her sister had refused Hooft before, but in the latter case a light fancy had been diverted, in the former an intense passion fatally thwarted. There is no reason for building up a romantic story that Brederoô died of love for Tesselschade: this would be extremely unlikely; but the innumerable poems in which he displays or disguises his infatuation for her person, leave us with no doubt about the depth and sincerity of his feeling. He died at the age of thirty-six, two years after the death of Shakespeare, and in him Holland lost the greatest dramatist she has ever produced.

Almost simultaneously with the death of Brederoô the daughter of Roemer became acquainted with a friend who was destined to take his place and to complete the circle of genius. This was Constantine Huyghens, a young man born two years later than Tesselschade, and now in his twenty-second year. He was a Hagenaar, or citizen of The Hague, a village entirely given up to politics, and with no literary activity. Yet he had read Roemer Visscher's poems with enthusiastic admiration, and had paid a flying visit to Amsterdam, to pay homage to the old poet and his daughters. But he came of a high and ambitious family, and a diplomatic career opened before him. In 1618, he was sent to London in company with the English Ambassador Carleton, who was a friend of his father's. He was presented to James I., then engaged in refreshing the weary Synod of Dort by 'his godly zeal and fiery sympathy,' and in hounding on the Stadtholder to the massacre of the Arminians. Huyghens was taken to Oxford, Woodstock, Windsor, and Cambridge; finally, in September 1618, he accompanied homewards the English delegates, who were

proceeding to assist at that weary Synod aforesaid. But the most noticeable thing in connection with this visit of Huyghens to London, was that he was permitted the honour, as he himself puts it, of pressing the hand of that incomparable divine poet, John Donne.

During the agitations of the political crisis, Anna Roemer began to develop her literary talent in a remarkable degree, and to show the didactic tendencies which afterwards entirely absorbed her work. The 'Maeghden-Plicht' of Cats the Emblematist was dedicated to Anna, and shows that she had already corresponded with the Zealand school of poets. While these literary amenities were passing between Amsterdam and Middelburg, the father of Huyghens noted in his diary, with singular brevity, on May 13, 1618, 'Barneveldt beheaded this morning, directly after breakfast.' This terrible judicial crime was execrated in the circle of Roemer's friends. Hooft was united by the strongest bonds of association and gratitude to the Stadtholder, but Vondel, at least, was a passionate partisan of the Advocate, and he and Coster laid no restraint on their scathing satires against the Gomarists and Counter-Remonstrants. In this Tesselschade herself, as a poem of hers to Vondel proves, ardently joined, and in the house of Engelsche Kaai verses were recited in the inmost circle, which would have brought the heads that read them to prison, if not to the scaffold. Vondel's burning ode, beginning–

> Holland had he hid and carried
> At his heart,
> Till old age, that had not tarried,
> Did its part ;

But to wash the oaths of cravens
In his blood,
And to fatten crows and ravens
With its flood? [1]

became a kind of watchword among the select company of the best spirits of Amsterdam, who met around the board of the gentle Anna, and the wronged soul of the great Barneveldt held these men and women closer together in a bond of protest. From this time forth we find Vondel strongly leaning to the Catholic religion.

As soon as the triumph of the Calvinists was assured, the rigid suppression of the drama began to be relaxed. Some magnificent posthumous plays of Brederoô's were performed, and Coster shyly came out of his shell, and got his Academy once more into working order. Already before 1619, Anna is conjectured to have published her *magnum opus*, the descriptive and didactic poem of 'De Roemster van den Aemstel' (The Glory of the Aemstel), a work of which the only known edition is without a date. Early in 1620, a second edition of Roemer's 'Zinne-Poppen' appeared with very considerable emendation and enlargement from the hand of Anna. Some of the verses attached to her father's work display her pedestrian muse at its best. A drawing of a giddy lady, singing to her own accompaniment upon the lute, suggests to Anna the following sensible little poem:—

A wife that sings and pipes all day,
And never puts her lute away,
No service to her hand finds she;
Fie, fie! for this is vanity!

[1] Appendix MM.

But is it not a heavenly sight
To see a woman take delight
With song or string her husband dear,
When daily work is done, to cheer?

Misuse may turn the sweetest sweet
To loathsome wormwood, I repeat;
Yea, wholesome medicine, full of grace,
May prove a poison—out of place.

They who on thoughts eternal rest,
With earthly pleasures may be blest;
Since they know well these shadows gay,
Like wind and smoke, will pass away.[1]

There was no fear that the authoress of such cheerful lines would be decoyed away into the barrenness of religious polemic. It has been supposed that Anna visited Zealand in this year, but to me it seems extremely improbable that in her father's infirm state she, as head of the house, would choose to take so long a journey from home. In fact, before the year was out, Roemer Visscher was dead, at the age of seventy-five. Two years earlier, in 1618, the famous Franz Hals had painted his portrait, a dreamy old man, with finely-cut features, slightly recalling those of his daughter Tesselschade; in the eyes a weary, wistful expression, but no trace of sourness. To the last he was the honoured centre of the most important literary *salon* in the north of Europe.

But the circle did not break up with his death, or even materially change. From all parts of Holland poetical tributes to the memory of their father poured in upon the sisters. Hooft wrote two genial epitaphs; Huyghens,

[1] Appendix NN.

who was away in Venice, sent a long poem of condolence.[1] All these elegies presupposed, in their tone, that the same welcome would meet all men of genius at the table of Anna and Tesselschade as at that of Roemer, and for two or three years Anna was at the head of the Amsterdam school. Meanwhile Laurens Reael had returned after a brilliant career. In 1616 he had succeeded Rhijnst as Governor-General of the Indies, he had defeated the Javanese at Batavia, and the English at Amboyna, and now, ripe with honours, he came back to Amsterdam to greet his friends. He started from the Moluccas in August 1619, and arrived at home in January 1620, to find that his patron and dear friend Oldenbarneveldt had been degraded, condemned, and executed before he himself had left his new splendours in Asia. Under the new rule there was little in Holland to attract or to solace Reael, and he drew more closely than ever to the sisters, at whose house he met Vondel, Hooft, and the lovers of the murdered advocate. Vondel himself,

[1] Huyghens, who was one of the greatest masters of metrical form of his age, in one of his epistles to Tesselschade uses, with the utmost ease and at great length, a stanza of which this is an example:—

Tesselschaedje,
Kameraedje,
Die dit praetje
Uit mijn hert,
En van binnen,
Uyt het spinnen
Van mijn sinnen.
Hebt ontwert.

This is more like one of the lovely creations of Victor Hugo or of Swinburne than a production of the heavy and fettered Teutonic tongues of the seventeenth century. But in respect of mastery over form Huyghens is *facile princeps* among the Dutch poets of his time or since.

in this year, 1621, wrote his remarkable poem, 'The Praise of St. Agnes,' in which his strong bias towards the Catholic religion first found definite expression. Another old friend returned to Amsterdam in 1621; this was Starter, who, anxious to collect his lyrical and amorous poems into a volume, and finding no type for music at Leeuwarden, came up to superintend the publication of his 'Friesche Lusthof,' or 'Frisian Pleasaunce,' an oblong quarto, illustrated in the most charming way, and altogether one of the most desirable books of that age. At the same time he brought out at Coster's Academy his tragedy of 'Daraide,' and continued to live at Amsterdam, in companionship with his old friends, until 1625, when he wandered away, and died obscurely fighting in the Thirty Years' War. Huyghens had gone in January 1621, to London, as Secretary to the Dutch Ambassador, and was dubbed Sir Constantine in the following year by the sword of James I. In March 1623, he returned to the Hague.

Meanwhile Hooft had been enjoying the luxury of his castle at Muiden since 1609. He found the house in a half-ruined condition, and its walls were almost destroyed by a great storm in 1612. It therefore became necessary to repair it thoroughly, and on this task the poet expended a great deal of time and trouble. At last it was completed, and sumptuously fitted up, and his charming wife and he hastened to press their friends to visit them. Muiden was a picturesque little castle, built four-square, with four pointed sexagonal turrets, a chapel and a central quadrangle. It stood in a lake, which itself formed the centre of an island contained between the River Vecht and the sea, so that it was completely isolated, except by a draw-

bridge on the south-western side. When Hooft accepted the bailiwick, the ground about the castle was bare, but he at once planted it on all sides with aspen, elm, and nut trees, which soon formed a pleasant feature of the landscape. To the south were gardens, and an orchard; on all other sides these young woods. In the orchard stood two memorable objects—a magnificent plum-tree, the fruit of which was specially dedicated to Hooft's friends, and a summer-house, where he sometimes wrote. He chiefly studied and composed, however, in one of his six-cornered turrets, which he had fitted up as a library, and from which, looking over the nut-copses, he could see the grey, shimmering line of the Zuider Zee. He called this room his 'Torentje,' or little tower, and under this name it became famous in Dutch literature. Here he wrote not only his great poems, but his still greater historical works. To us he is chiefly interesting, at present, in the former capacity, but it may not be amiss to remind ourselves that Motley, not the worst of judges, has gone out of his way to call Hooft one of the greatest historians, not of Holland, but of Europe. It was in Torentje that he wrote his life of Henry IV., and to this fact Vondel refers in his famous lines:—

Oftentimes you choose to clamber
To this six-side cloister chamber;
  But its solitude, I own,
  Lets you never be alone.
In this chamber was begotten
What will never be forgotten,—
  Greatest Henry's mighty fame,
  And the glory of his name
From this little place came flying,
Fledged by your fine pen undying.[1]

[1] Appendix OO.

To share the amenities of Muiden Castle, and to enjoy a little rest after their sorrow, the daughters of Roemer became the guests of Hooft. Anna came as a friend, but her literary sympathies were by this time far enough alienated from Hooft and the Italian school. Tesselschade, on the contrary, came as a disciple, and from this time forth was habitually accustomed to lay her poems before Hooft for his revision. Hitherto we have said too little of the sweet poetess herself, and too much of her surroundings. In truth, so rich was the period in which she lived, and so great the men of genius with whom she associated, that her own productions, judged simply as literature, are a little thrown into the shade. She was the intimate friend, as we have seen and are to see, of the four greatest and most original poets of Holland—Vondel, Hooft, Brederoô, Huyghens—and it cannot be pretended that her verses are worthy to be seen by the side of theirs. It is natural, considering the bias of her mind, to find her resembling Hooft most nearly. But she had original lyric genius, and her scholarship of the poet of 'Granida' is never slavish. A close translation of one of her pastorals will exhibit fairly enough the charms and the limitations of her style:—

THE COMPLAINT OF PHYLLIS.

My sheep, who hunger satisfied
With fragrant thyme, now turn aside
To these rose-petals, from my crown;
They brought their scent to sacrifice,
And ravished heart and soul with spice,
Whene'er to dance I was led down.

'Tis better that the blossoms feed
My lambkins which I, dying, lead,
Than that, undone, dishonourèd,

Between my groans and sighs of woe,
Bathed in my hot tears' burning flow,
They, faultless, wither on my head.

Ah! chew them small with little nips,
Innocent flock! but when your lips
Are weary, and you fall on sleep,
Muse on the death of my delight,
That bids me toss in sad despite
My rosy garland to my sheep.

For you were near when faith and troth
Philander swore, who breaks them both,
And lewdly courts another lass!
For you were near, when his sweet words
Bound my weak heart, and heaven records
How tender and how false he was!

Yet health, and not revenge be found!
Give balsam for my aching wound,
Give balsam from the heavenly store!
But if revenge your will decree,
O gods, chastise, but let it be
The prick of conscience, and no more.

My sorrow, sure, will make him burn,
My passion to his passion turn,
His passion turn again to me;
And so, once more, as once hath been,
No happier pair on earth be seen
Than Phyllis and Philander be.[1]

But in one instance, the praise of music, that inspiring theme for a lyrical poet, lifted the imagination of Tesselschade into a height which she never approached again. The poem called 'Songsters' is not only her best, but worthy of any one of the greatest poets of her age. I attempt as literal a rendering as possible of this exquisitely musical ode; I adhere, as in all other cases, strictly to the metrical form of the original.

[1] Appendix PP.

I.

THE WILD SONGSTER.

Praise thou the nightingale,
Who with her joyous tale
Doth make thy heart rejoice,
Whether a singing plume she be, or viewless wingèd voice;

Whose warblings, sweet and clear,
Ravish the listening ear
With joy, as upward float
The throbbing liquid trills of her enchanted throat;

Whose accent pure and ripe
Sounds like an organ pipe,
That holdeth divers songs,
And with one tongue alone sings like a score of tongues.

The rise and fall again
In clear and lovely strain
Of her sweet voice and shrill,
Outclamours with its song the singing springing rill.

A creature whose great praise
Her rarity displays,
Seeing she only lives
A month in all the year to which her song she gives.

But this thing sets the crown
Upon her high renown,
That such a little bird as she
Can harbour such a strength of clamorous harmony.

II.

THE TAME SONGSTER.

But, wild-wood songster, cease!
Draw breath and hold thy peace!
Thy notes make no sweet noise
That can compete for tone with Rosamunda's voice,

Who hath so dear an art
Of whispering to the heart
In measured plaintive sobs,
That, bound in friendship's net, like a snared bird it throbs.

Whose cunning voice instils
Deep wisdom, while it fills
The minds of those who hear,
And makes the soul leap up into the listening ear.

In moanings low she dies,
And then with tender sighs,
In amorous soft conceits
A world of various tongues she nimbly counterfeits.

No weariness we know,
Though from her throat may flow
Much song; new pleasures high
Still charm the insatiate ear with each fresh harmony

Here rarer rapture lives
That fitful music gives;
No feathered song so gay
As this, that summer gives nor winter takes away.[1]

In 1621 Anna was exchanging compliments and verses with the famous Peter Paul Rubens, one of whose Madonnas she was then copying. She writes to him familiarly, and signs herself 'your friend.' How they came to be acquainted does not seem to be known.

In 1622 Anna paid her long-promised visit to Zealand, leaving Tesselschade, it would appear, at home in Amsterdam. She arrived at Middelburg, after a long sea-voyage, in the early summer, and remained there till the end of July. Middelburg was at this time second only to Amsterdam in literary vitality, and as a point of fact the books produced in the former town were far more sumptuously printed and illustrated than those in the

[1] Appendix QQ.

latter. Father Cats, now a man of forty-five, ruled the society of the wits; he was a personage of no little wealth and grandeur. Among his literary associates the most eminent were Sir Simon van Beaumont, the Pensioner or Governor of Zealand, a pastoral and lyric writer of no mean gifts, Joanna Coomans, called the Pearl of Zealand, and Westerbaen, a careful imitator of Cats. Anna was welcomed with enthusiasm by these people, and when, immediately after her return, the southern poets published, in a very handsome quarto, their collected effusions, this book, entitled the 'Zeeusche Nachtegael,' or Zealand Nightingale, was dedicated to 'Anna Roemers, the Dutch Sappho,' in terms of rapturous eulogy, the excellent Joanna Coomans being especially exuberant in praise, and many of Anna's own best pieces were included in this production. After this time her heart was always with the southern poets, the school of Dort, as they came to be called. Tesselschade in the meanwhile moved in the old circle of Hooft and his wife, Vondel, Reael, Starter, Coster, and the few other remaining friends of her father; and this fidelity to the earlier companionships continued past a crisis in her life which is usually very fatal to friendships. In 1622 had appeared the posthumous 'Song-Book' of Brederôo, a publication that bore upon it the stamp of the Roemer circle, with its splendid portrait of Brederôo, surrounded by monodies bearing the initials of Coster, Vondel, and Hooft, and containing every form of passionate appeal to the heart of Tesselschade, 'the glory of Amsterdam,' 'goddess bearing the name of the island rich in ships,'—that is the Texel,—and many other lyrical addresses barely concealing his lady's name from

the public, to whom no doubt it was well known. These references must have been touching to the heart of the sweet Tesselschade, who consented, however, in the following year, to bury their memory in a less romantic passion. She accepted the hand of a sailor, a middle-aged widower, Allart Krombalgh, of Alkmaar, her sister Gertrude assisting at the ceremony, on November 1, 1623. To all the poets the marriage of their beautiful friend was an occasion not to be put by. Vondel wrote several pieces on the occasion, and one epithalamium of great length and beauty. Huyghens, who had just returned to the Hague from his second visit to London, poured out his genial soul in poems which displayed, as never before, his absolute supremacy over the language, and his unrivalled gifts of form. These exquisite verses flow in a measure so buoyant and so rich in rhyme that they absolutely preclude the idea of translation. Vondel's and Hooft's soberer eulogies might be attempted, but space fails us. Tesselschade—now, it must be remembered, in her thirtieth year, but still radiantly beautiful—went away with her husband to live in Alkmaar. Three months later Anna followed her example, and bestowed her mature charms on Dominicus Booth van Wesel, on January 12, 1624. This couple proceeded also to North Holland, but to a still remoter place, a polder entitled Wieringewaard, to the north of Hoorn. So the family that had so long formed the nucleus of literary life in Amsterdam had now entirely left it.

Anna appears no more as the friend of the Amsterdam school. She corresponded with Hooft, to whom directly after her marriage she presented a 'loose peruke.' With

Cats, now gone to reside at Dort, and with Simon van Beaumont she remained on intimate terms; but she was now forty years of age and her literary interests stagnated. Tesselschade, on the contrary, wrote with ardour during her married life. Already she was busy in translating the 'Gerusalemme Liberata' of Tasso, to which Vondel refers in his epithalamium, congratulating her on bravely venturing to the wars with Godfrey; she patiently continued this version, which Hooft revised, and to which there are many contemporary references, but, unhappily, it was never printed, and somehow, 'as rare things will, it vanished.' It may yet reappear, and would be a most welcome addition to early Dutch literature. For eleven years, from 1623 to 1634, Krombalgh and his poet-wife lived in quiet domestic happiness. She bore him two daughters, one named Tadea, the other, like herself, Maria Tesselschade. Her relations with Hooft remained on the most intimate footing. As early as 1621 they read Lucian together, and Tesselschade wrote to Hooft in Italian. In 1622 we find her sending poems to him for correction, and soon after her marriage he writes that his heart is fast bound by a triple cord of Tesselschade, Anna, and Reael. It may be said in passing that the merits of Reael had been of too shining an order to allow his connection with the murdered Barneveldt to stand in the way of his promotion, and he was rapidly rising to the highest civil honours. On June 6, 1624, Hooft lost his excellent wife Christina, and on July 6 we find him writing to Tesselschade what is really a very pathetic and touching letter, in spite of its pedantic references, in the spirit of that age, to Boethius and Montaigne. His four

children had preceded their mother to the grave, and Hooft, in the midst of his luxury at Muiden, was desolate indeed. Already in 1625 he was courting the beautiful Susanna van Baerle; but he was moreover exceedingly busy on the composition of his great historical works.

The year 1625 was a critical one in the career of Vondel. This great genius, one of the most original and powerful poetic natures of modern Europe, was approaching the age of forty not only without having won a very wide reputation, but almost without having deserved it. Few poets have developed so slowly as Vondel, but on the other hand few have continued their production so late. The 'Pascha' in 1612 was his *début*, and he was already in his twenty-fifth year; until 1619 he did little more than lay up stores of knowledge and experience, and brood in an infinite distress over the bigotry and violence of his countrymen, to whom the revolution had brought not only liberty but licence. The meeting of the Synod of Dort brought about a healthy revulsion in Vondel's mind; Barneveldt was dead, Calvinism had triumphed, there was now at all events none of the sickening anxiety, the hope without hope which had brought so much tension into these last years. In 1619 he took leave of the Flemish Chamber of the Lavender with the performance of his second biblical tragedy, 'Jerusalem Laid Desolate,' and went over to the Eglantine. For the next six years we find him in the highly-wrought, impassioned attitude of defiance to the Calvinistic majority which Alberdingk Thijm has known how to reproduce with so much imaginative fidelity in the admirable early scenes of his 'Portretten.' He waited for the death of Prince Maurice, and

when that arrived, in 1625, the result of these years of silence appeared in Vondel's brilliant lyrical invectives against the judicial murder of the Advocate and the persecution of Hugo Grotius. All Amsterdam was up in arms, and the poems of Vondel became a burning party question. In the midst of this turmoil, his tragedy of 'Palamedes, or Murdered Innocence,' was brought out, in which the trial of the Advocate was painted under the transparent veil of a classical list of persons. Oldenbarneveldt was Palamedes, Prince Maurice, Agamemnon; the Stadtholder of Friesland, Diomedes. The poet was summoned before the court at Amsterdam, threatened with a charge of high treason and a prison at the Hague, and finally fined 300 guldens. His enemies had hoped to bring him to the gallows, and all they succeeded in doing was to extract a small fine, which a rich friend of the poet's immediately paid; moreover, from the moment of his trial Vondel was the most famous man in Holland, and a power in politics against the 'Saints of Dort,' as the extreme Calvinists were called.

We must pass hurriedly over the next nine years of Tesselschade's life. She lived very happily in Alkmaar with her husband, taking a lively interest in literature and her friends, and writing and correcting her own poems. The success and prosperity of the circle was something very remarkable. Brederoô and Starter had been offerings to the jealous gods, but all the rest flourished in the most extraordinary way. Cats at Dort and Huyghens at the Hague reigned like little kings in the midst of an admiring and luxurious society. In 1627 Huyghens married Susanna van Baerle, to whom Hooft had been

making suit, but the latter, without any bitterness, transferred his affections to Leonora Hellmans, and married her before the year was out. About this same time arose the famous Anna Maria van Schurman, called the Torch of Wisdom, really a very surprising person, one of the most learned women that ever lived, who spoke Greek and wrote Arabic and knew everything. A great fuss was made about her, but it is recorded that Hooft was very faithful to his old friend, and being called upon to admire the new wonder, replied, 'She smells of the schoolroom; she cannot hold a rose to our Tesselschade.' Indeed, at this distance of time, the charms of Anna van Schurman have rather a faded fragrance. In 1626 Reael went to England as the representative of Holland at the coronation of Charles I., and came back to Amsterdam Sir Laurence Reael; in 1628 he was Ambassador of the States to the court of Denmark. This very serious person amused himself on these high journeys by paraphrasing in Dutch the 'Basia' of Joannes Secundus, an occupation which strikes the modern reader as a little frivolous. He had been better occupied, perhaps, in old days in Roemer's house, translating, with Hooft's help, Seneca for the instruction of Vondel and Tesselschade who knew no Latin.

In 1630, the Chamber of the White Lavender merged itself in Coster's Academy, and Vondel gave a subject on the occasion for a prize poem. Hooft was to award the prize, and the successful candidate was Tesselschade. I do not know what the modern critics who talk about 'Mutual Admiration' would say to this transaction, but I have no doubt the poem, which we possess and which is very good,

though a little obscure, deserved its honour. In the same year Hooft and his wife paid the Krombalghs a visit at their house in Corn Street, Alkmaar, and when they returned brought Tesselschade back with them to Muiden, while her husband effected a change of house into a better locality in Long Street. It was perhaps upon this occasion that Hooft wrote his well-known verses describing the way Tesselschade spent her time in his house. The seventeenth century did not excel in *vers de société*, but these are above the average of pre-Priorian compliment:—

Love-god, stern of sovereignty,
Mark the maiden of the Y,
Who in her proud youth and story
Robs thy mother of her glory,
Blushing cheek, and winsome guile,
And a lovely artless smile!

What employs her leisure so?
Thoughts are working, fingers go!
Busy are her eyes, drooped sweetly,
Throat and lips are warbling featly;
Youth and joy can have no fence
'Gainst such dangerous diligence.

Now she makes the diamond pass
O'er the dumb face of the glass;
Now with golden thread she lingers,
Painting cloth with nimble fingers;
Now the pencil bears, and pen,
Kindly charming idle men.

See, she curves her slender throat's
Outline up and down the notes!
Or to words her eyes she's liming,
All her soul gone out in rhyming!
Or she bends her gracious tongue
To the French or Roman song![1]

[1] Appendix RR.

According to Barlaeus, Tesselschade adorned her house, which was exquisitely fitted up, with paintings of her own; he particularly mentions a flying Psyche, and a landscape of Muiden Castle. If her painting was like her poetry, she must have tended rather to the classic manner of Poelenburgh than to the style of the Amsterdam realists, among whom Rembrandt was now taking a foremost place. In 1631, Coster and Vondel were at Muiden, and about this time Barlaeus was invited there to meet Tesselschade. Barlaeus was a man of great learning and energy, who had only very lately been able to extricate himself from the tedious duties of a country minister. For years and years he had been pastor of a little parish on the dull island of Overflakkée, with no literary centre nearer to him than the rather obscure Chamber of the Thistle at Zierikzee; since then he had been away in France. and only now, at the age of forty-seven, was he able to mix with men of letters. He was a brilliant and ardent person, the best Latinist of the day, and he was received at once into the Muiden circle, and became the most infatuated of Tesselschade's admirers; she played to him, it appears, successively on the organ, klavier, viol, guitar and cithern, and he strove in vain to decide on which her skill in melody was most divine. In this charming way the whole circle lived; at least at Muiden and at Alkmaar it was so. We find Hooft writing: 'We live here as those dead to the world; each day is so like the other, that life seems a ship becalmed in a dead sea of stillness.' Hooft's letters are a most invaluable contribution to our knowledge of those times. I know no correspondence so distinguished and at the same time so playful and intimate. For instance, what a delightful

piece of absurdity is that letter, of February 1632, in which he assures Tesselschade that his wife is no Medea to tear little Teetjen Krombalgh in pieces, or make a meal off the limbs of Maria; on the contrary, she is 'a sweet-milk heart, full of sugar,' and Tesselschade must hurry to bring her little girls to Muiden, where the Hoofts are dying to embrace them. In November of the same year, Tesselschade presented Hooft's wife and daughter each with a goblet engraved by her own hand; it is said that these still exist, and show rare technical skill. A young French or Italian musician, Francesca Duarte, about this time joined the circle, and shared with Tesselschade Hooft's enthusiastic friendship. In 1633, she settled at Alkmaar, and this gave the Hoofts an excuse for visiting both families in that year.

But a great sorrow waited for them behind all this happiness. On May 28, 1634, Hooft wrote a long letter, begging Tesselschade to come and read Marini with him, upbraiding her with neglecting poetry, and asking her what she thought of some translations Huyghens had been making from John Donne. Receiving no reply, he grew anxious, and at last sent a messenger to Alkmaar, who returned with news that the eldest daughter Tadea (Teetjen), was very ill with small-pox. Full of anxiety he communicated the fact to Huyghens and others, but in June he has to report not only that little Teetjen is dead, but that Krombalgh himself has succumbed to the disease. Huyghens has recorded that the child was bled to death, and Hooft uses the same expression about the father. It may be supposed that this was the result of a foolish attempt to allay the violent secondary fever, in accordance with the

ignorant practice of the time. At all events, our poetess was thus at one blow left a widow, and deprived of her eldest child.

She bore this sorrow with an exquisite patience. Hooft, who supported her through this terrible trial with the most friendly fidelity, wrote that the heroes might go to school to this much more enduring heroine. He very wisely recommended her to silence her memories of the past by renewed devotion to literary work, and she took his advice. She resumed her version of Tasso, and worked on upon it until it was finished, no slight or holiday pastime for a woman to complete. It would seem that nobody was poor in Holland in those halcyon days, and Krombalgh had left his widow well provided for. With her daughter, the young Tesselschade, a child in every way worthy of so beautiful and so distinguished a mother, she retired to a house called Belvedere, outside the town of Alkmaar, in a wood, and here she spent the next eight years in great contentment. Barlaeus has dedicated a whole Latin poem, one of his best, to the description of this house, which Tesselschade adorned with all manner of artistic objects paintings by her own hand, tapestries, porcelain, the wonders of the newly-opened and still fabulous East. The poet gives a charming picture of his friend, *sericâ in veste splendens*, shimmering in her satin dress, in her lovely garden, her lute at her hand, as pretty a figure, surely, as ever Netscher or Metzu painted for us in boudoir or courtyard. It must not be supposed, however, that she gave herself up to a frivolous life; on the contrary, her writings became tinged with a serious, almost a pietistic colour, and she wrote many spiritual poems, among which

her hymn to St. Mary Magdalene is the best known. It begins :—

Adorned or unadorned art thou, O Magdalene,
As with unbroidered hair thou jewel-less art seen,
Thy chain of pearls undone, thy shining gold profaned,
And all that men esteem as vile and false disdained ;
Since these can well betray thy tender youth from heaven,
And be a stumbling-block that were for pleasure given ?
Godfearing woman, hail ! Cling fast, as to a wall
That neither time can move nor gloomy fate make fall.[1]

Her verse now reminds the critic in no way of Hooft, but of the more massive and robust style of Vondel. Indeed, at this time her relations with the latter poet were very intimate, and he himself was passing through a remarkable period of transition. Still nominally a Protestant, it is recorded by Brandt, his first biographer, that he was powerfully drawn towards Rome by a beautiful widow lady, and it has always been understood that this lady was Tesselschade. Vondel's wife was now dead, and in his isolation at Amsterdam his heart went out in tender passion towards the sweet poetess at Alkmaar, in whom he found so close and so intelligent a sympathy. There does not seem to have been any talk of marriage between them ; she easily made his sensitive spirit understand that she would not accept again the risks of so near a tie, but the love was great on his side and no doubt responded to on hers. News that the great Vondel was going over to the Popish Church, seems to have found its way to the Hague, and the energetic Huyghens, who was a staunch Protestant, and had just brought out a volume of divine poems, thought it his duty to upbraid Tesselschade, and, if it

[1] Appendix SS.

might be, convert her. He set about his pious task in furious style, and attacked his gentle friend in poems and epistles, till at last she could bear it no longer, and entreated Barlaeus to take up the cause on her behalf. Nothing could be more welcome to Barlaeus, and Huyghens suddenly found himself stung in excellent Latin verse, and reproached for his cruelty. He replied that he loved the child too much to spare the rod, but his versatile mind soon wearied of this puritanic fervour, and he returned humbly to his old adulation. Meanwhile it soon appeared why Barlaeus had been so ready in the defence: he had been sighing to Hooft of his wretched condition as a widower, and now he laid his laurels and his heart at the feet of Tesselschade. Never was a poetess so lyrically wooed: the poems of Barlaeus to Tesselschade are so numerous that they form a whole section of his poetical works, under the heading 'Tessalica.' He sung of her in a boat at sea, playing the organ in Alkmaar Church, singing with Francesca Duarte, riding on horseback; he sung to other people about her, to Huyghens sleeping under her roof, to Hooft about to receive a visit from her; but in every poem he exalted her priceless worth and beauty, and insinuated that he alone should guard it. For a long time she bore this hot siege with patient amusement; Huyghens and Hooft, anxious, perhaps, to frustrate the hopes of Vondel, encouraged Barlaeus in every way. At last, in a letter about other matters, she enclosed a copy of a stanza of Cats, which runs as follows:—

When a valvèd shell of ocean
Breaks one side or loses one,
Though you seek with all devotion
You can ne'er the loss atone,

Never make again the edges
Bite together, tooth for tooth,
And, just so, old love alleges
Nought is like the heart's first troth.[1]

The generous Barlaeus understood the hint, and pressed his suit no more; but his warm-hearted, intimate friendship was no whit slackened by the disappointment.[2] In 1639, Tesselschade came up to Amsterdam, with her friend Francesca Duarte, to sing before the French Queen Dowager, Maria de' Medicis, and to present to her an Italian poem of her own composition. She was at this time busy translating into Dutch the 'Adonis' of Marini; this work, like her Tasso, has unhappily been lost. A new race of young literati, now springing up, claimed her patronage, and laid their first-fruits before her. The poetess Alida Bruno claimed her as her poetic mother; two young dramatists destined to a great reputation, Vos the pupil of Vondel, and Geraerdt Brandt the *protégé* of Barlaeus, sought the honour of her friendship. The Old Chamber of the Eglantine had in 1631 become merged in the Academy, and the stage of the latter had proved inadequate as a national theatre. It was rebuilt on a grander scale and opened in January 3, 1638, by the performance of one of the greatest works in the Dutch language, Vondel's immortal tragedy of 'Gijsbrecht van Aemstel,' a drama that still lives on the stage, and enjoys a traditional popularity, when much of the admirable literature of that age exists only for antiquarians. In 1639, Vondel dedicated to Tesselschade his version of the

[1] Appendix TT.

[2] For this story Scheltema is responsible; I cannot find that the letter is in existence.

'Electra' of Sophocles, and in 1641, again to her, though this time under the pseudonym of Eusebia, his sacred tragedy 'Peter and Paul.' On his fifty-fourth birthday, November 17, 1641, he went over to the Catholic Church.

He suffered for this step. His friends turned their backs upon him, even the hospitable Hooft refused him admission to Muiden. He bore his unpopularity with fortitude, and produced his great dramatic poems in rapid succession: three tragedies, 'The Sons of Saul,' 'Joseph in Dothan,' and 'Joseph in Egypt,' belong to this period of suspicion and estrangement. It must have been a consolation to Vondel, that in 1642 Tesselschade removed, with her daughter, to Amsterdam, and took up her abode under the roof of her sister Gertrude van Buyl. Scarcely had she arrived, when, in March 1642, she lost her left eye from a spark that flew out of a smithy as she passed. Hooft, Huyghens, and Barlaeus have all left poems describing this accident in glowing colours, but the poetess herself only mentions it to thank Barlaeus, smilingly, for the 'learned plaister over my eye,' which he sent. She still took an interest, as she had ever done, in literary events, and 'assisted,' as the French say, at two famous *débuts*, the first performances of Vos's 'Aaron and Titus,' a blood-and-thunder tragedy on the lines of 'Titus Andronicus' in 1642, and Brandt's 'Dissembling Tarquin' in 1643. But the shadows were gathering around her, and her most eventful life was not destined to linger into old age. Her daughter, a charming girl, was now approaching womanhood, and in her all Tesselschade's hopes and wishes were bound up. One by one the other ties dissolved. In 1642 Reael died; Hooft passed away

in the sixty-seventh year of his age, on May 21, 1647; on January 14, 1648, Barlaeus was laid by Hooft's side in the New Church of Amsterdam, and Vondel wrote above them both a touching epitaph. As if the loss of these dear friends were not enough, Death laid his hand upon the apple of her eye, her only remaining comfort, her daughter. Her heroic patience failed her at last, and on June 20, 1649, she died of grief in the house of her niece in Amsterdam. All the poets wrote verses on her death, but the most simple and touching were those of Huyghens, of which I essay a version:—

'Tis Tesselschade's grave!
Let no one vainly try
To measure out in words her matchless quality;
The honour that men give the Sun to her they gave.

And why in death she lay,
Listen, I will relate:
O mothers, think, it was her daughter sealed her fate,
And she who owed her life took life from her away.

The child had little blame;
The mother saw her die,
And died that she to keep her company might try.
So perished Tesselschâ through her own tender aim![1]

Anna van Wesel, her sister, died December 6, 1651. Cats survived till 1660, nearly completing his eighty-third year; Vondel and Huyghens each outlived his ninetieth year, lingering respectively until 1679 and 1687. So passed away the last of the great race.

[1] Appendix UU.

VONDEL AND MILTON.

THE critics of the last century, whose idea of æsthetic analysis not unfrequently seems to have been to form a mosaic of such little bits of a poet as could in some degree be held to resemble little bits of earlier poets, found in Milton a wide field for their ingenious labour. With an extraordinary memory and a taste for poetry that far overflowed the conventional banks of English and classical literature, Milton, at the outset of his career, seems to have steeped his imagination in the fine thoughts of almost all the European poets, and to have occasionally combined or reproduced their felicities in his own verse. But when his blindness came upon him, and he was more and more thrown for refreshment back upon the stores of his memory, he was unable, and, perhaps, not anxious, to ascertain whether a noble fancy or a chord of melody that floated in his brain was or was not his own in any sense but that of conquest. Like Goethe, he had the august arrogance of a supreme poet who is conscious that he confers immortality on a thought by stealing it, and that what is stolen leaves his lips so glorified in expression that it has become a new thing. A great deal of foolishness has been said about plagiarism; to plagiarise is the instinct, the characteristic audacity of almost every poet

of the highest class. It is only when it is committed by a small poet or poetaster—in other words, when skill is wanted, and the hand of the thief is seen in the pocket of the owner—that the action becomes blamable, because contemptible. To carry out no further an argument that may to some readers seem paradoxical, it is at least certain, for praise or blame, that the later poems of Milton are studded with memories, more or less faint or vivid, of the works of numerous previous writers. The French didactic poet, Du Bartas, whether in the original or in the translation of Joshua Sylvester, supplied him with ideas; some fine images and a whole train of thought were taken from the richly coloured 'Christ's Victory and Triumph' of the younger Giles Fletcher; even Cowley's 'Davideis' was laid under contribution for 'Paradise Lost.' These suggestions and reminiscences have been frequently dwelt upon, but not so much attention has been paid to the still bolder appropriations Milton made from various foreign writers. Some notice, but to an inadequate extent, has, indeed, been taken of the influence on the great English epic of the 'Adamo' of the Italian dramatist, J. B. Andreini, who died shortly before Milton commenced his great task. The 'Adamus Exul' of Hugo Grotius, published in 1601, has not escaped the notice of Milton's last and best biographer, Dr. Alfred Stern. It is probable that a close study of Italian and Spanish literature would bring to light many more cases of Miltonic adaptation and suggestion. But the most full and curious of all is one which has, indeed, been frequently pointed out in a cursory manner, but never, to the knowledge of the present writer, been carefully investigated. This is the amount to which Milton was

indebted in his sketch of the Fall of the Rebel Angels to the choral drama of 'Lucifer,' by the Dutch poet Vondel.

The Dutch language was not so little studied in the beginning of the seventeenth century as it now is. Elizabeth, being in some sort looked upon as the head of the Reformed party throughout Europe, supplied help to the Netherlands in their revolt against Spain; and when the United Provinces, after their almost single-handed and heroic struggles, succeeded in establishing for themselves, not merely independence, but a foremost place among the States of Europe, there was a good deal of diplomatic coquetting between Holland and England before the ultimate jealousy and hatred set in. The sudden political start made by Holland was almost immediately succeeded by the creation of a brilliant literature. Within twenty years after the proclamation of the Federal Commonwealth of the Seven United Provinces, in 1581, all the greatest names in Dutch literature were born. It was a time of great imaginative revival all over the North of Europe. The same period saw the birth of Arrebo and of Stjernhelm, respectively destined to be the fathers of Danish and of Swedish poetry; and of Martin Opitz, in whom German literature threw out its first modern blossom. In England the great Elizabethan school was at its climax, and light and heat radiated from London through all the Reformed countries. But in Holland, more than anywhere else, all the elements of imaginative production seemed concentrated and intensified in a brief period of brilliance.

In the last chapter I have given a rapid outline of the rise and development of this literature, and I have traced the lives of the principal Dutch poets down to the year

1649. Vondel was then in his sixty-fifth year, and had reached that time of life at which work is usually laid aside, the harvest of the brain being reaped and garnered. It was not so however with this great man. The decline of life, the loss of friends, the burden of poverty only increased the light of his singularly heroic genius. In 1641 he had joined the Church of Rome, in 1644 Christina of Sweden, whose tendencies were Popish, had honoured him with a golden chain, and her portrait. These events had not increased the favour with which his Protestant fellow-citizens regarded him, nor did his didactic poem 'Altaergeheimenissen' (Mysteries of the Altar) add to his popularity. On the other hand his tragedy of 'Maria Stuart' brought him much praise and profit in 1646. Vondel, it may be remarked, was the first poet to select for dramatic treatment this highly romantic theme; at Mary's death he was two years old, and therefore in some sense her contemporary.

In 1648 he celebrated the Peace of Munster by the performance of 'Leeuwendalers,' a pastoral in the style of Tasso or Guarini. After the death of his dear friend Tesselschade in 1649, he gave over the stocking-shop in Warmoesstraat to his eldest son, and went to live on the Cingel, then the limit of Amsterdam, with his daughter Anna. In 1653 he was made the president of the Guild of St. Luke, being crowned on the occasion by the famous painter, Bartholomeus van der Helst. He completed the long list of his biblical tragedies with the 'Solomon' in 1649. It was in his daughter's house that he completed, in his sixty-seventh year, the masterpiece of his life-time, the most brilliant poetical work in the Dutch language. This was the 'Lucifer,' which was brought out with great

display of scenic heavens, but after two nights withdrawn on account of the great expense it involved. It was then printed in 1654. Milton was living in the 'pretty garden-house opening into the park,' and still acting as Secretary to the Council of State, although his failing sight had led him, some months before, to suggest Marvell as his successor. In April peace had been made between England and the United Provinces, and there was a temporary cessation of hostilities. (There can be little doubt that Milton, who had received regular lessons in the Dutch language from Roger Williams, kept himself well versed in the best current Dutch literature.) There were frequent interchanges of scholarly civilities. Huyghens had been in London within Milton's manhood, burning incense to the English poets, and carrying back to Holland memories, and, alas! imitations of the great John Donne. Such a poet as Hooft, kindred in so many ways to Milton's own youth, divided as it was between Puritanism and the worship of beauty, between pietism and sensuous paganism, cannot but have attracted his learned and curious mind. (Hence, one may well believe that immediately on the publication of Vondel's 'Lucifer' a copy found its way to Milton; it may have been one of the last books he read with his own faded eyes. Four years afterwards—that is, in 1658—he is supposed to have commenced 'Paradise Lost,' and in 1667, thirteen years later than the Dutch drama, it saw the light.)

(We all know that, in the great English epic, the Fall of the Angels forms a vast episode in the story of the Fall of Man. In 'Lucifer,' the angels fill the foreground, and man is secondary and out of sight. The scene of the Dutch drama is laid in heaven itself, and never leaves it.) Above,

just beyond our vision, God remains apart, ineffable; below, the new-created human couple walk their paradise; but we never trespass on the domain of either. The persons are all angels, and when the curtain rises they are all blessed and serene. This apparent serenity, however, is the mask of a suspicion that has hardly ripened into ill-feeling. Beelzebub and Belial are discovered in conversation when the drama opens; and we learn from the first that Apollyon has been sent by Lucifer, the Stadtholder of the States of Heaven, to make a closer investigation of Adam's bliss, and the condition in which God has placed him. Belial, leaning from the sheer heights, sees Apollyon rising from circle to circle, outspeeding the wind, and leaving a track of splendour behind him. He soars into the blue hyaline of heaven, while the celestial spheres almost pause upon their courses as they lean to gaze upon his countenance; he seems to them no angel, but a flying fire. At last, like a star, he alights on the rim of heaven, and bears in his hand a golden branch. Beelzebub praises the blossom and fruit of this branch in very luscious alexandrines; its golden leaves are studded with aerial dew, and between them the jocund fruit glows with crimson and with gold. It would be a pity to rend it with the hands: the very sight of it fascinates the mouth. If such fruits can be eaten in Eden, the bliss of angels must give way to men. To this light hyperbole Apollyon responds eagerly and seriously, and his listeners are roused to inquire in what this felicity of man consists. He gives a very spirited and poetical account of his journey to the earth, and a vivid but rather rococo description of the wonders and beauties of the earthly paradise, which he praises as far more varied and exquisite

than the heavenly. He passes to the subject most interesting to his hearers—the nature and functions of the inhabitants of this garden. It seems that at the moment that he fluttered on wide pinions over Eden, Adam was giving names to all the animals. Griffins and eagles were obedient to this man, and dragons and Behemoth, and even Leviathan, while the trees and bushes rang with melody. But of all marvels this has amazed him most, that the two inmates of the garden have power subtly to weave together body and soul, and create double angels, out of the same clay-flesh and bones. It is for this purpose, no doubt, that God has just made these two strange creatures, that he may reap from them a rich harvest of souls. Apollyon watches, with an agony of jealousy and longing, their joyous dalliance; and at last, with infinite pain, tears himself away from a scene in which he can have no part. But of all the beauties and wonders, he praises Woman most, and grows so ecstatic that he declares—

Search all our angel bands, in beauty well arrayed,
They will but monsters seem, by the dawn-light of a maid.

Beelz. It seems you burn in love for this new woman-kind!

Apoll. My great wing-feather in that amorous flame, I find
I've singed! 'Twas hard indeed to soar up from below,
To sweep, and reach the verge of Angelborough so;
I parted, but with pain, and three times looked around;
There shines no seraph-form in all the æthereal bound
Like hers, whose hanging hair, in golden glory, seems
To rush down from her head in a torrent of sunbeams,
And flow along her back. So clad in light and grace,
Stately she treads, and charms the daylight with her face:
Let pearls and mother o' pearl their claims before her furl,
Her brightness passes far the beauty of a pearl!

Beelz. But what can profit man this beauty that must fade,
And wither like a flower, and shortly be decayed?[1]

[1] Appendix VV.

The description that closes with the passage above quoted bears many striking points of resemblance to the Fourth Book of Milton's epic. What follows is contrary to the purpose of the English poet. Apollyon goes on to explain that an eternity is assured to mankind by a tree of immortal life which he has seen in the midst of Eden, by eating the fruit of which man will live for ever, and the number and power of his children be eternally on the increase. The key-note of the drama is then struck, for Beelzebub, quivering with jealousy, exclaims—

Man thus has power and scope to wax above our heads.

At this moment a trumpet is heard, and the hosts of heaven assemble. Gabriel, 'chief of the angelic guards,' appears, attended with the chorus of cherubim, sent as herald from the throne of God. His message is to this effect: God has created man a little lower than the angels, in order that, in the process of time, he may ascend the staircase of the world into the summit of uncreated light, the infinite glory. Though the spiritual race now seems to overtop all others, yet God has from eternity concluded to exalt the human race, and to transport them into a splendour which is not different from that of God. The eternal Word, clothed in flesh and bone, anointed as Lord and Head and Judge, you shall see give law to all the troops of spirits, angels, and man, from his unshadowed kingdom. Then the clear flame of seraphim shall seem dark beside the godlike splendour of man. This is destiny, and an unrevokable destiny. A burst from the chorus—

Whatever Heaven decrees shall please the heavenly host—

softens the severity of Gabriel's demeanour, and he passes on to discuss the present state of the angelic orders. Vondel's conceptions in this respect are simply those of St. Thomas Aquinas and Dante: we seem to move in the fourteenth century, as we read of the inmost hierarchy of seraphim, cherubim, and thrones; of the second of dominations, virtues, powers, and the outer hierarchy of principalities, archangels, and angels. We must remember, however, that Milton also was not free from the technical expressions of a celestial cosmogony that the researches of science had already exploded. To return to the earlier part of Gabriel's charge, it will be noted that Vondel, though shadowy in his theology, fully escapes that rock of Arian heresy on which Milton struck in his Sixth Book; but, once started on the *primum mobile*, he wanders on in a sufficiently tedious prolixity. At length, however, the speech of Gabriel ceases, and the first act closes with a long antiphonal ode from the chorus. As this passage—almost the only one hitherto translated into English—was rendered with some success by the late Sir John Bowring, I will not attempt to give a version of it here. It is a long rhapsody in praise of the divine attributes, expressed in language of exceptional sublimity, and with a mingling of daring theological dogma with organ-harmony of music which is not unworthy of those that 'sing, and singing in their glory move.'

In reviewing this first act, we see that, as in 'Paradise Lost,' jealousy is the seed out of which the shoot and flower of rebellion bear such rapid fruit of destruction. But whereas in that poem, in almost precisely similar terms, God himself commands obedience to the Son, 'whom this

day I have begot,' and proclaims His superiority to the angels, which enflames them to sullen revolt, it is here the ignominy of watching the crescent supremacy of the vile rival man, born of the dust, that rouses the jealous anger of the Princes of Angelborough. The causes are widely distinct; the consequences are curiously identical. But we must not press on too fast: when the first act closes, all appears docile and quiet in heaven; if complaint there be, it finds no voice in words.

But the second act opens in startling contrast to this universal subjection. Lucifer himself enters, attended by Beelzebub and other of his own familiar followers. They draw rein in this quiet place, and the leader opens discourse as follows:—

> Swift spirits, let us stay the chariot of the dawn,
> For high enough, in sooth, God's morning-star is drawn,
> Yea, driven up high enough! 'tis time for my great car
> To yield before the advent of this double star,
> That rises from below, and seeks, in sudden birth,
> To tarnish heaven's gold with splendour from the earth!
> Embroider no more crowns on Lucifer's attire,
> And gild his forehead not with eminent dawn-fire
> Of the morning-star enrayed, that rapt archangels prize,
> For see another blaze in the light of God arise!
> The stars grow faint before the eyes of men below;
> 'Tis night with angels, and the heavens forget to glow.[1]

In this tone of almost petulant indignation the Stadtholder of Heaven proceeds, and only ceases to call the attention of Beelzebub to the sound that reaches them from far away. It is the trumpet of Gabriel, who pronounces the same disastrous message at another of the gates of Angelborough. The melancholy of Lucifer is stirred and roused by the passionate declamations of Beelzebub, who

[1] Appendix WW.

cries that an earth-worm has crept out of a clod of earth that he, the lord of heaven, might with downcast eyes and bended knees adore it. Lucifer had best not wait for the order to lay down his sceptre, but leave his throne at once, and take the lyre in hand, ready, at the first sight of man, to smite its chords with a servile plectrum. All this ironical advice is little to the taste of the prince.

> Nay, that will I resist, so be it in my power,

he cries; and Beelzebub takes instant advantage of his defiance to build him up in conceit of his own majesty and power. His ever-crescent light, the first and nearest God's, no captious decree can diminish, no upstart mortal approach. Shall a voice of lower pitch thunder from the throne? To carry out this vain design of promoting man, were to violate the sacred right of the eldest child's inheritance. Such an assumption, actually forced on the angelic orders, might provoke all heaven armed against one. Lucifer replies in a spirit of patriotic devotion, which has nothing of the rebel angel in it, but is rather inspired by the recent memories of the holy struggle of the United Provinces against Spain: 'If I am a child of the light, a ruler over the light, I shall preserve my prerogative. I budge before no tyrant, nor archtyrant Let who will budge, I will not yield a foot Here is my fatherland. Let me perish, so long as I perish with this crown upon my head, this sceptre in my fist, and so many thousands of dear friends around me. That fall will tend to honour and unwithering praise,

> En liever d'eërste Vorst in eenigh lager hof,
> Dan in't gezalight licht de tweede, of noch een minder,

'and better to be first prince of some lower court, than in the blessed light to be second, or even less.' These two lines are not less famous in Holland than is with us that single line, in which Milton intensified the expression of Vondel's idea in half the number of words. But in the midst of these vague desires and unshaped instincts of defiance, the chariot of Gabriel, in whose hands the book of God's mysteries lies folded, is driven their way, and Lucifer determines to question the herald further as to the actual import of this message that so trenches on angelic pride. Beelzebub leaves him, and the two great princes meet. Lucifer addresses Gabriel with a frank statement of his doubts and apprehensions. For what purpose has the eternal Grace humiliated its children? Why has the angel nature been thus precipitated into dishonour? Will God unite eternity to a beginning, the highest to the lowest, the Creator to the created? Must innumerable God-like spirits, unweighted by bodies, bow before the gross and vile element of mortal clay? He closes by entreating Gabriel to unlock the sealed book he holds, and explain to his wondering intelligence this terrible paradox. To this eloquent appeal Gabriel has no very intelligible reply to give; he repeats the statement of destiny, he charges the Stadtholder with obedience; but he fails to give any very salient reasons for a decree that must have startled and perplexed himself. 'Obey God's trumpet! you have heard His will!' is the sum of the explanation that he has to give. Lucifer then draws a picture of the misery of those coming days, when he will have to see man sitting beside the Deity upon His throne, and watch the incense-censers swinging to the sound of thousand thousand unanimous chorales, each

bar of which will dull the majesty and diamond rays of the Morning Star, and echo like wailing in the courts of heaven. Gabriel interposes occasionally with commonplaces about obedience, duty, and contentment, while the lament of Lucifer grows keener and shriller as he mourns beforehand over the ruin of his dignity. Nay, even of God's dignity; for he declares that if the fountain of light is to plunge its splendour into the pit of a morass, the heavens will be struck blind, the stars whirl and fall dizzily into space, and disorder and chaos rule in Paradise. It is to give God His right that he thus presumes to oppose His decree. To which Gabriel pertinently, if rather prosaically, answers: 'You are very zealous for the honour of God's name; but without considering that God knows much better than you do in what His greatness consists.' He quells the murmurs of the Stadtholder with some sharp words about the necessity of cheerful obedience, and bids him see to it that his feet walk in the steps of God's revealed wisdom. Beelzebub, being left alone with Lucifer, hastens to point out to him that the obvious effect of this new edict will be to clip the wings of the Stadtholder's authority, which, indeed, the latter needs no argument to perceive. Lucifer vows to take his honour into his own hands; he will raise his seat into the very centre of heaven, past all the circles with their starry glory. The heaven of heavens shall furnish him with a palace, the rainbow shall be his throne. On a chariot of clouds, borne up on air and light, he will crush and override all opposition, even from the Lord of earth himself. Or, if he falls, the transparent arch of heaven shall burst like a bubble, and all the universe crash in chaos. He summons Apollyon to council. In the dialogue that

ensues some dramatic skill is shown, though Vondel's force lies rather in description, in gorgeous expression, and in lyric rhetoric, than in the true field of the drama. Lucifer is flushed and arrogant; Beelzebub, an ethereal Iago, hounds him on to rebellion; Apollyon is prudential and diffident, a graceful courtier, who hints a weak point and hesitates difficulties. The argument of the latter is that Michael, God's Field-Marshal, holds the key of the armoury; the watch is entrusted to him, and not a star can move without his thorough consciousness. He finally exemplifies the serene strength of the Deity by saying that although the Castle of Heaven should set its diamond gates wide open, it would fear not craft, nor ambush, nor attack. Lucifer, however, decides that the attempt must be made; but first of all Apollyon is sent to direct Belial to sound the minds of the angels; the 'persuasive accents' of Belial, as in 'Paradise Lost,' being set great store by for their power of eloquent dissimulation, since

> his tongue
> Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
> The better reason, to perplex and dash
> Maturest counsels.

It may be said, in passing, that the figure of Beelzebub, though to less marked a degree, resembles the grand figure so named in Milton's poem. Lucifer and Beelzebub ascend and disappear: Belial enters with Apollyon, who is now eloquent in the course he lately shunned, and Belial needs no persuasion. They pass to whisper the project of rebellion far and wide among the Orders. While they are busied in this work, the stage is crowded with the Chorus of loyal angels, who contemplate, as from the Primum

Mobile, the Hierarchies circling in the Crystalline Heaven, illuminated by the uncreated light, as Dante in the 'Paradiso' gazed on the snow-white Rose of the Blessed. They witness with alarm the change that comes over the snowy, starry purity of the Orders.

Why seem the courteous angel-faces
So red? Why streams the holy light
So red upon our sight,
Through clouds and mists from mournful places?
What vapour dares to blear
The pure, unspotted, clear
And luminous sapphire?
The flame, the blaze, the fire
Of the bright Omnipotence?
Why does the splendid light of God
Glow, deepened to the hue of blood,
That late, in flowing thence,
Gladdened all hearts? [1]

What is the cause, they cry? Since, but now, all the balconies and battlements of heaven were thronged by myriads of happy faces, singing the praise of Man! The Anti-chorus takes up its parable in reply—

When we, enkindled and uplifted
By Gabriel's trumpet, in new ways
Began to chant God's praise,
The perfume of rose-gardens drifted
Through paths of Paradise,
And such a dew and such a spice
Distilled, that all the flowery grass
Rejoiced. But envy soon, alas!
From the under-world came sneaking.
A mighty crowd of spirits, pale
And dumb and wan, came, tale on tale,
Displeased, some new thing seeking;
With brows that crushed each scowling eye,
And happy foreheads bent and wrinkled;
The doves of heaven here on high.

[1] Appendix XX.

Whose innocent pinions sweetly twinkled,
Are struck with mourning one and all,
As though the Heavens were far too small
For them, now Adam's been elected,
And such a crown for Man selected.
This blemish blinds the light of grace,
And dulls the flaming of God's face.[1]

This ode, which is here rendered with scrupulous adherence to the original, is an interesting example of the alternation of exquisite with tawdry and prosaic imagery, and noble with flat and poor expression, which is characteristic of most of Vondel's writings. These choruses at the close of each act are not peculiar to the 'Lucifer,' but common to Dutch dramatic poetry generally. We have in English an exactly analogous example in the 'Cleopatra' of Samuel Daniel, a tragedy written in rhymed verse, with solemn choral variations.

In the second act the rebellion was confined to the desires of a few princes; in the third act it has taken fast hold of the multitude. The whole process is precisely that recounted in Book V., lines 616–710, of 'Paradise Lost.' Belial and Apollyon have passed far and wide among the ranks of the angels, and, while calling them together under the banner of Lucifer, have 'cast between ambiguous words and jealousies to sound or taint integrity.' The angels are discovered huddling together, with all their beauty tarnished, drowned in grief and deep sunk in their own melancholy thoughts, and, ever and anon, with one voice they cry—

Alas! alas! alas! where has our bliss departed?

The loyal Chorus are properly displeased with this

[1] Appendix YY

excessive and groundless show of depression. They declare that Heaven freezes with the wind of their lamentations. The azure ether is not accustomed to hear a music of affliction go up in vapour through its joyous vault. Triumphs, songs, and symphonies on stringed instruments befit the blessed. They call upon their fellow-choristers to aid them in cheering these sorrowful souls. But the Luciferists, as they are now called, only repeat their monotonous cry—

Alas! alas! alas! where has our bliss departed?

The Chorus reminds them of their being. They were born to be joyous; brought forth, like flowers, upon a beam of the glory of God; created to hover and flash through the unshadowed light of life. At last the Luciferists inquire if the Chorus is really in earnest in asking them why they mourn; is it not well enough known that the angels have fallen from their high estate to make room for the dull brood of Man? The charter given by God has been repealed; the sun of spirits is suddenly gone down, and, burying their faces in their folded wings, they repeat once more their miserable refrain. The Chorus, excellent persons with whom the reader finds it a little difficult to have patience, exclaim: 'How dare you censure the high ordinance? This seems like a revolt! O my brothers, cease this lamentation and defiance, and bow yourselves under the inevitable yoke!' This exemplary advice is severely criticised by the Luciferists; and a long discussion ensues, in which each party says a single line, after the occasional manner of most Greek plays. The ball of argument is tossed from hand to hand,

and both speak well, the Luciferists, however, with most point and wit. The great seducers, Belial and Apollyon, then come upon the scene, and affect the greatest surprise at the appearance of the ranks of angels plunged in sorrow and wrapped about with desolation. They inquire, with simulated anxiety, into the cause of this; but the Luciferists are sad beyond speech, and the Chorus replies: 'They mourn that the state of Man triumphs, that God will entwine His being with Adam's, and spirits be subject to human authority. There you learn briefly the ground of their sorrow.' The Chorus further begs that Belial will settle the dispute; but without advantage to itself, for the angel-princes take, of course, the rebel standpoint, and argue with more subtlety than the lower Luciferists. The wrangling progresses farther, the one side continually preferring their charge of a promise broken, a charter disannulled, and the other repeating in a variety of shapes the formula that

> Obedience pleases God, the ruler of our day,
> Far more than incense clouds or godlike music may.

Belial at last sums up in saying—

> Equality of grace would fit the Godhead best;

a rebellious assumption of superior justice, which rouses the Chorus to a somewhat long-winded summary of the contrast between the supremacy of the Creator and the subjection of the created. During the closing words of this harangue, the clouds and lurid fiery blaze increase, and out of the sinister gloom appears Beelzebub. On his appearance, the miserable Luciferists repeat their uniform cry. The new-comer consoles them, and bids them be of good cheer—

> Oh cease from wailing; rend your badges and your robes
> No longer without cause, but make your faces bright,
> And let your foreheads flash, O children of the light!
> The shrill sweet throats, that thank the Deity with song,
> Behold, and be ashamed that ye have mixed so long
> Discords and bastard tones with music so divine.[1]

The followers of Lucifer reply. They are now so enraged that they declare themselves ready to smother Man in his own blood, rather than permit his usurpation. They entreat Beelzebub to lead them on to battle, and they swear to follow his standard. Beelzebub, 'than whom, Satan except, none higher sits,' with dignified indignation admirably displayed, rejects the proposition of the mutineers, and enters into a long argument with them, in which he pretends to be slowly persuaded of their wrongs. He further feigns to be exceedingly moved by the defalcation of Apollyon and Belial, but he steadily refuses their offer of leadership, unless they will permit him to lead them, as suppliants for mercy, to the Throne of Grace; and there is a peculiar motive for the unctuous zeal of this last offer, for, while the words are in his mouth, the magnificent presence of Michael is before us. The Field-Marshal addresses Beelzebub, in a haughty tone, and, in spite of this last *flosculus* which has fallen from his lips, roundly accuses him of stirring up rebellion. Beelzebub, nothing abashed, humbly rebuts the charge, and prays Michael to assist him in interfering in favour of peace. Michael thereupon offers, in a sufficiently peremptory tone, to lay their petition before the Deity. The Luciferists boldly insist on their right, and blaze up into the most absolute defiance. Michael thereupon warns them

[1] Appendix ZZ.

that those who fight against him fight against God; but the rebel host shriek back that the Stadtholder, Lucifer, is on their side. Michael can hardly believe it; and then, in thunderous rhetoric, he calls down divine vengeance upon them, and, gathering the ranks of the faithful about him, soars upward to lay the matter at God's feet. Beelzebub raises the courage of the Luciferists by announcing the advent of Lucifer, who approaches on his chariot, and greets them with great dignity of speech. The Luciferists pour out their anguish to him thus—

> Forbid it, Lucifer, nor suffer that our ranks
> Be mortified so low and sink without a crime,
> While Man, above us raised, may flash and beam sublime
> In the very core of light, from which we seraphim
> Pass quivering, full of pain, and fade like shadows dim.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> We swear, by force, beneath thy glorious flag combined,
> To set *thee* on the throne for Adam late designed!
> We swear, with one accord, to stay thine arm for ever;
> Lift high thy battle-axe! our wounded rights deliver![1]

Lucifer, however, still deems it politic to feign a loyal and pious mind; but at length he gives way, especially to the arguments of Beelzebub. To his own superior intelligence the contest seems hopeless, the battle lost before it is fought. But at last he cries—

> I will content me, then, force to resist by force!

But he stops the shouts of delight with which this concession is greeted, to bid the princes take witness that he is forced into this step by the need to protect God's realm against usurpation. Beelzebub, then, like some arch-heretic or anti-pope, busies himself to prepare divine honours for the new deity. The crowd take up the idea, and shout—

[1] Appendix AAA.

Crown, crown with triumph great God Lucifer.

At the command of Beelzebub, they bring perfumes and burn them before him, and in choral antiphonies they sing his praise.

Follow the chief, whose trumpet and whose drum
Protect the crown of Angeldom!
Behold, behold, how the Morning Star outflashes![1]

They pass away in triumph, and the Heavenly Chorus descends, filling the vacant scene, and trilling a mournful epode to this dithyrambic passion, full of pain and anxious wonder.

The fourth act opens with a most Miltonic blare of martial melody. All heaven is in a blaze, and Gabriel speeds to bid Michael prepare to defend God's name. The third part of heaven has sworn fealty to the traitorous Morning Star, and leads him on with shouts and singing. Melancholy and depression have now seized the loyal angels, and the unfaded seraphim sit brooding on their woe. To Michael, who demands to learn what effect the news produced at the Throne of God himself, Gabriel replies—

I saw God's very gladness with a cloud of woe
O'er-shadowed, and there burst a flame out of the gloom
That pierced the eye of light, and hung, a brand of doom,
Ready to fall in rage. I heard the mighty cause
Where Mercy pleaded long with God's all-righteous laws,
Grace, soothly wise and meek, with Justice arguing well.
I saw the Cherubim, who on their faces fell,
And cried out 'Mercy, mercy! God, let Justice rest!'
But even as that shrill sound to His great footstool pressed,
And God seemed almost moved to pardon and to smile,
Up curled the odious smoke of incense harsh and vile

[1] Appendix BBB.

Burned down below in praise of Lucifer, who rode
With censers and bassoons and many a choral ode;
Then Heaven withdrew its face from such impieties,
Cursed of God and Spirits and all the Hierarchies.[1]

Michael, thereupon, in a speech of great poetic vigour, calls the battalions of heaven to arms. They all pass out, and the scene is filled by the Luciferists, who enter, accompanying Lucifer and Beelzebub. They cry to be instantly led to storm the ranks of Michael: but Lucifer first inquires into the condition of his own army, and then proceeds to take their oaths of allegiance. He bids them remember that it is now too late to recede, but they have taken a step at once fatal and fortunate which now forces them with violence to tear from their necks the yoke of slavery to Adam's sons. But whilst they shout in answer, and rapturously pledge themselves to follow the Morning Star, a herald is seen winging his way towards them from the height of heaven. This is Raphael, sent on a last embassy of peace and reconciliation. The position of Raphael in this act closely resembles that of Abdiel, 'faithful found among the faithless, faithful only he,' in the end of the Fifth Book of 'Paradise Lost.' In each case a single seraph opposes Lucifer at the moment of his violent action, alone, in his own palace, and undaunted by the hostile scorn of myriads. There is, however, the important distinction that Raphael is an ambassador, while the beautiful figure of Abdiel distinguishes itself by standing out in unshaken loyalty from the very ranks of the insurgents themselves. The resemblance is least marked in the opening words of Raphael's address. Instead of adopting the lofty arrogance of Michael or the cold im-

[1] Appendix CCC.

partiality of Gabriel, Raphael flings himself, overwhelmed with grief, on the neck of the Stadtholder. He says that he brings balsam from the lap of God; all will still be forgiven, if the rebel angels be disarmed, and if Lucifer return to his loyalty. He weeps in picturing to the assembly, in florid and impassioned language, how in the old happier days Lucifer bloomed in Paradise, in the presence of the sun of Godhead, blossoming out of a cloud of dew and fresh roses. He reminds Lucifer that his festal robes stood out stiff with pearls and turquoises, emeralds, rubies, diamonds, and bright gold. He describes him, exactly as Memling or Van der Goes would have painted him two centuries earlier, standing behind the throne of some gorgeous Madonna, with his gold hair streaming against the clear green and blue of a distant strip of landscape, or glancing among his jewellery, as he crushes an enemy under his mailed foot. It would have well suited a painter of that effluent period to paint the Stadtholder, as Raphael describes him, with the heaviest sceptre of heaven in his hand, and blazing like a sun among the circling stars. The arguments of Raphael are more worldly than those of Abdiel. He is afraid that Lucifer's beauty will be changed into the semblance of a griffin or dragon or other monstrous thing, and stimulates his vanity in the hope of changing his purpose. At last he interposes force, or a courteous semblance of force, and strives to wrest the battle-axe out of one of the Stadtholder's hands, and his buckler out of the other. The arch-rebel replies with dignity to these familiarities, and utterly rejects his overtures of peace. Raphael argues, but in vain; for Lucifer declares that Adam's honour is the whetstone of his battle-axe, and that he

has but to reflect on the indignity which has been threatened to the angels, to grasp more tightly the weapon that must wipe out the memory of that insolence. Raphael takes it absolutely for granted that the rebellion will instantly and utterly fail; and, finding Lucifer deaf to his loving and sentimental entreaties, he threatens him with the punishment prepared for him. He declares that a pool of sulphur, bottomless, horrible, has in this very hour gaped to receive him. To all this Lucifer cannot listen with patience; he repels him with indignation and defiance. Raphael continues, however, calling him the perjured leader of a blind conspiracy, and declaring that the chains are actually being forged for his limbs. In a brilliant passage Lucifer wavers and sickens, wonders if he dare return to his duty, seeks vainly for counsel and confidence, but is constantly held up by his pride and rage. At the moment that he wavers most, the trumpet of God sounds through the circles of heaven, and it is too late. The battle breaks upon his despair, but Apollyon is full of hope and daring. Raphael, in an agony of regret, and with a breaking heart, remains on the scene, while the Luciferists rush to battle. To him the Chorus of good angels enters, and they with him join in a hymn of passionate entreaty to God even now, if it be not too late, to exercise the glorious privilege of pardon.

So closes the fourth act; and when the fifth opens, Raphael is discovered at some distance from the field of battle, giving rapturous thanks for its victorious issue. He has not fought in it himself, but he has been watching from far off, and now he sees the shields of good angels returning, and glittering like suns, each shield-sun stream-

ing triumphant day. Uriel comes to him out of the ranks, and as he crosses the plain of heaven he swings his flaming sword till its rays are flashed back from the facets of his diamond helmet. Called upon by Raphael to describe the fight, Uriel tells how God commanded Michael, the prince of his army, and faithful Gabriel, next to him in command, to lead forth the invincible ranks of the angels against the rebellious godless army, and to sweep them from the pure azure of heaven into the gulf,

> which ready opens wide
> His fiery Chaos to receive their fall.

Straightway the heavenly army flew to victory like an arrow from the bow. Unnumbered multitudes of celestial warriors, well-marshalled, progressed in a three-cornered phalanx, a triangle of advance, a unity in a three-pointed light. Michael, with the lightning in his hand, led the van. Meanwhile the rebel host was speeding to meet them with no less velocity.

> Their army waxed apace, and like a crescent moon
> Threw out two points like horns that gained upon us soon,
> Or like the star that fronts the Bull i' the Zodiack,
> And the other monsters quaint that wheel around his track
> With golden horns bedight.[1]

One horn is led by Belial and one by Beelzebub, while Lucifer brings on the van. The description of the Apostate, though with barocco details omitted by the purer taste of Milton, is closely parallel to the celebrated analogous passage in the Sixth Book of 'Paradise Lost.' Encircled by his staff-bearers and green liveries, in golden harness, on which his coat of arms shone in glowing purple,

[1] Appendix DDD.

he sat in his sun-bright chariot, the wheels of which were thickly inlaid with rubies. Like a lion or fell dragon he raged for the fight, and his soul flamed athirst for destruction; nor, as he flashed through the field, could any foe see his back, sown all over with stars. With his battle-axe in his hand, and on his left arm a buckler engraved with the Morning Star, he rushed into the fray. Raphael interrupts again to mourn over the beauty of this phœnix, now doomed to endless flame, but bids Uriel proceed. The latter describes how the battle burst in a hail of burning darts, and the whole air was thunder. After this artillery had expended its force the armies met on closer terms, and, lighting down from their chariots, met hand to hand with club and halbert, sabre, spear, and dagger. The plumes of the angels were singed with lightning, and all their gorgeous panoplies were mingled in undistinguishable confusion, so that one saw turquoise-blue and gold, diamond and pearl, mixed and jarred together, nor knew which splendour belonged to which angel. Again and again repulsed, still Lucifer brought back his shattered army, still only to break like a wave on the iron ranks of the blessed. At last from a height he poured his forces on them: and Vondel, in describing the charge, adds a figure of speech which may have been inspired by one of the landscapes which Jacob Ruysdael was just beginning to exhibit at Amsterdam, but which can hardly be drawn from the home-staying poet's own experience—

> Like some great inland lake or northland waterfall
> That breaks upon the rocks and raves with rushing brawl;
> A terror to wild beasts in deep sequestered valleys,
> Through stones and down from heights in mighty jets it sallies.[1]

[1] Appendix EEE.

Then the battle raged more than ever; the vaults of heaven were deafened with 'the roar of an angel onset;' but the point of Michael's array pierced the half-moon of Lucifer's with a lurid blaze of red and blue sulphurous flame, and with blow on blow, like thunder-clap on thunder-clap, in spite of all Lucifer's fierce endeavour, struck it apart and divided it. Then, soaring high above the fight in his bright steel array, Lucifer gloomed like a blue dragon, poisoning the whole air with his split tongue and blowing odious vapours through his nostrils. At last Michael and he were face to face, and around them half the battle paused to watch the encounter of two such magnificent princes. First Lucifer swung high his battle-axe with intent to fell God's banner, on which the mystic name of the Creator stood blazoned in crystalline splendour. But Michael shouted to him to beware and to yield—to lead off his godless rout, or else prepare to suffer the worst pangs of punishment. But the maddened archangel strove all the more to cleave the diamonds that formed the sacred name, but the moment he touched them the blade of his battle-axe sprang to atoms. Then Michael grasped his lightning sword, and cleft the arch-enemy of the blessed through helmet and head. He fell heavily out of his chariot. Then Apollyon felt the flaming sword of Uriel. Beelzebub still raged, Belial still defied the hosts of God; but the fall of the Stadtholder had fully broken the half-moon of the rebel onset, although the giant Orion attempted to lead a return charge. Uriel compares the appearance of the fallen archangel to that of an ass, a rhinoceros, and an ape, such an uncouth monster did he seem lying prone on the battle-field.

Apollyon fled; and soon he and all the rest were driven thunder-struck before the sword of Michael till they came to the abyss that gaped to receive them, and were hurried down, roaring and yelping, into the jaws of hell itself, while Michael, returning, was greeted with cymbals, shawms, and tambours.

The remarkable points of resemblance between this long and spirited description of the fall of the rebel angels and that given in the Sixth Book of 'Paradise Lost' are, of course, far too close and too numerous to be mere coincidences. There can be no doubt whatever that the deep impression made on Milton's imagination by the battle in the 'Lucifer' remained vividly before him when he came to deal with the same branch of his subject. In some respects the earlier poet has distinctly the advantage. He gives but one fight; while Milton, for no intelligible reason, divides the action between three days. The additions of the gunpowder and the ridiculous tossing about of mountains torn up from their bases are certainly no improvements upon the simpler, more human description of Vondel. In volume of melody and in the beauty of individual passages the English poet, of course, far exceeds the Dutch.

Uriel ceases his discourse as Michael and the victorious Chorus enter. They sing this ode, curious for its variations of metre and the eccentric distribution of its rhymes—

Blest be the hero's hour,
Who smote the godless power,
And his might, and his light, and his standard,
Down toppling like a tower;
His crown was near God's own,
But from his lofty throne,

With his might, into night he hath vanished;
God's name must shine alone.
Outblazed the uproar fell,
When valorous Michael
With the brand in his hand quenched the passion
Of spirits that dared rebel.
He holds God's banner now;
With laurels crown his brow!
Peace shall reign here again, and her forehead
Shall vanquished Discord bow.
Amid the conquering throng
Praises to God belong;
Honour bring to the King of all kingdoms!
He gives us stuff for song.[1]

Michael, in a triumphal harangue, proclaims the victory of the loyal cause, and points to the hosts of the fallen angels, ever sinking dizzily downwards, writhing, accursed, misshapen. It is at this minute that Gabriel hastily enters bearing most startling tidings—

Gabriel. Alas! alas! alas! to adverse fortune bow!
What do ye here? In vain are songs of triumph now,
In vain of spoil of arms and gonfalons ye boast!
Michael. What hear I, Gabriel?
Gabriel. Oh! Adam is fallen and lost!
The father and the stock of all the human race
Most grievously hath erred and lies in piteous case.[2]

Lucifer has gathered together the remnants of his army in the bowels of hell, and, to hide them from God's eye, has concealed them in a cloud, a dark cavern of murder. Seated in the midst of them, in hellish council, he addresses them, precisely as in Milton, and proposes to them to attack man by force or subtlety; the seduction of the human race is agreed upon. Lucifer gloats over the future misery of man, fallen like themselves, and rejoices to imagine that this will complete their revenge on God,

[1] Appendix FFF. [2] Appendix GGG.

and ensure the defeat of His purposes. Belial is then deputed to make his way up from hell to the Terrene Paradise, and, having accomplished the journey, he tempts Eve exactly as recounted in Genesis, and she falling is the cause of the fall of Adam. How Eve gives her husband the apple, and how they awake in dolorous plight from their state of happy innocence, is pathetically told. God thunders among the trees of the garden; and Michael bids Uriel undertake the duty, that in 'Paradise Lost' he undertakes himself, of driving the guilty pair out of Eden with the two-edged flaming sword. Michael then charges other archangels with the final punishment of the rebel and now intriguing angels, and with this doom of endless pain the drama closes—

Ozias, to whose fist the very Godhead gave
The heavy hammer framed of diamond beaten out,
And chains of ruby, clamps and teeth of metal stout,
Go hence, and take and bind the hellish host that rage,
Lion and Dragon fell, whose banners dared to wage
War with us thus. Speed swift on their accursed flight,
And bind them neck and claw, and fetter them with might.
The key which to the gates of their foul pit was fitted
Is, Azarias, now into thy care committed;
Go hence, and thrust therein all that our power defied.
Maceda, take this torch I to your zeal confide,
And flame the sulphur-pool in the centre of the world;
There torture Lucifer, and leave his body curled
In everlasting fire, with many a prince accursed,
Where Sorrow, wretched Pain, numb Horror, Hunger, Thirst,
Despair without a hope, and Conscience with her sting
May measure out their meed of endless suffering.[1]

When we consider to how great an extent an English writer was about to borrow from this poem, it is singular to find its Dutch author acknowledging a debt to a now

[1] Appendix HHH.

forgotten English writer. In the learned and interesting preface to his play, Vondel notes, while citing earlier writers on the same subject, 'among English Protestants, too, the learned pen of Richard Baker has discussed very broadly in prose the fate of Lucifer and all the matter of the rebellious spirits.' This was Sir Richard Baker whose 'Chronicle' Sir Roger de Coverley was so fond of; a wealthy but imprudent gentleman, who ended his days in the Fleet Prison. The passage referred to by the Dutch poet is to be found in section *Which art in Heaven*, of Baker's 'Meditations and Disquisitions upon the Lord's Prayer,' 1637, a work which Sir Henry Wotton commends as having 'not a little of the African style of St. Austin.'[1]

The 'Lucifer' was not received very favourably in Holland. It was true that the violent and internecine strife of the two great religious parties, the burning and parching zeal to which the noble Barneveldt had fallen a victim thirty years before, had in a great measure cooled down. But still fanatic rage ran very high in the United Provinces, and one attack after another was made upon 'the false imaginations,' 'hellish fancies,' and 'irregular and unscriptural devices' of Vondel's beautiful drama. An effort was made in February 1654 to prevent the representation of 'the tragedy made by Joost van den Vondel, named Luisevar, treating in a fleshly manner the high theme of God's mysteries.' When this fell through, and the piece had been acted, a still more strenuous effort was made to prevent the printing and to prohibit the sale;

[1] Sir Richard Baker seems to have reflected much on the story of the Fallen Angels; I find it discussed again in his 'Meditations and Disquisitions on the Seven Penitential Psalms,' 1639, and in 'On the First Psalm of David,' 1640.

but at last, through a perfect sea of invective and obloquy, the poem sailed safe into the haven of recognised literature. Its political significance, real or imagined, give it no doubt an interest that counterbalanced its supposed sins against theology. (It was considered—and the idea has received the support of most modern Dutch critics—that in 'Lucifer' Vondel desired to give an allegorical account of the rising of the Netherlands against Philip II. According to this theory, God was represented by the King of Spain, Michael by the Duke of Alva, Adam by the Cardinal Granvella, and Lucifer by the first stadtholder, William the Silent, who was murdered in 1584.) There are several difficulties in the way of consenting to this belief: in the first place, the incidents occurred more than seventy years before the writing of the poem; and, secondly, the event of the one rebellion was diametrically opposed to that of the other. William of Orange, indeed, was murdered by a hired assassin, but not until he had secured the independent existence of the new State; and there would be a curious inappropriateness in describing the popular hero as a fallen and defeated angel thrust into hell. There is, however, another theory of the political signification of the 'Lucifer,' which seems to me much more plausible. (It is that which sees in the figure of the rebel archangel the still dominant prince of the English Commonwealth, Cromwell, the enemy of Holland, and in the God and the Michael of Vondel's drama, Charles I. and Laud still surviving in their respective successors.) Considered as a prophecy of the approaching downfall of the still flourishing English Republic, the allegory has a force and a spirited coherence that are entirely lacking in the generally received version.

If Milton had preserved his original design, it is probable that the resemblance of his poem to Vondel's tragedy would have been still greater than it is. In the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, are, or were, two drafts of Milton's first scheme for 'Paradise Lost,' and they show that his earliest intention was to treat the theme in a dramatic form. It is strange that in this day of incessant reproduction and republication these most interesting documents have never been presented to the public. It would be exceedingly interesting to note in what form the essentially epic story of the Fall of Man originally impressed the imagination of Milton before his unerring instinct for art led him on the better way.

Soon after the representation of 'Lucifer' heavy sorrows fell upon the aged poet. His son mismanaged the business in Warmoesstraat, and in order to stem the approaching bankruptcy Vondel sacrificed his own little fortune of 40,000 gulden, but in vain. In spite of his infirmities he travelled to Denmark to treat with his son's creditors, and on his return was obliged to accept a wretched clerkship to support himself. In this misery Holland allowed her greatest poet to drudge from his seventieth to his eightieth year, and his employers had the insolence to reproach the old man with sometimes writing verses in his office hours. I doubt if in all the tragical annals of literature there is a sadder story than this, and that London should have let Otway starve seems to me less infamous than that Amsterdam should have plagued the aged Vondel so harshly for a pittance of fourteen pence a day. Nothing extinguished the flame of his genius, however. He recommenced his series of biblical tragedies. The 'Jephta' appeared in 1659, the 'Samson' and 'King David

Restored' in 1660. In the latter year he completed his translations of the 'Œdipus Tyrannus' and of the 'Æneid.' I can but enumerate his next dramatic productions, the 'Adonis' of 1661, the 'John Calling to Repentance' and the 'Batavian Brothers' of 1662, the 'Phaeton' of 1663, and the epic poem of 'De Heerlijkheid der Kerke' (The Glory of the Church) of the same year. We must however pause an instant before the 'Adam in Ballingschap' (Adam in Exile), 1664, a biblical drama the choruses of which are among the most lovely productions of the age. In this play we find a lyrical poet of nearly eighty warbling his wood-notes as delicately and as freely as the young serenader that sings to his lady-love at twenty-five. If we consider the time of life at which it was composed, and the circumstances, the 'Adam in Ballingschap' is certainly one of the most marvellous works on record. In 1666, Vondel celebrated the naval triumphs of the Dutch over the English in some spirited odes, and in 1667 published his last tragedy, the 'Noah.' On August 10, 1668, having nearly completed his eightieth year, he was called before the Burgomaster and released from his drudgery by the gift of a small state pension. He continued to amuse himself by publishing translations of Sophocles in 1668, and of Ovid in 1670, retaining his faculties and his force of mind until the last. He lived to see all his poetical pupils die before him, except Antonides van der Goes, who survived until 1684. But the young men of genius whom Vondel had loved best passed away very early,—Jan Vos, the promising author of 'Aaron and Titus,' dying in 1667, and Reyer Anslo, whose epic of 'The Plague at Naples' still lives in Dutch literature, meeting his fate from the pest he sung of, at Perugia, in 1669.

Vondel suffered from no disease in his old age, and succumbed at last to the cold of sheer senility. His last couplet was improvised to his friend and biographer Brandt, who tells us that the old man remarked the numbness of extreme age creeping to his heart, and, laughing, said that this must be his epitaph:—

> Here lies Vondel, still and old,
> Who died because he was so cold.

He drew his last breath on February 5, 1679, dying five years after Milton, although more than twenty years his senior. He was ninety-one years and three months old, and his enormous span of life had embraced the death of Spenser and the birth of Addison.

Almost till the day of his death he laboured at the improvement of the literature of his country. But he had the mortification, whilst outliving every one of his great contemporaries, whether in poetry or philosophy—for even Spinoza, the last great Dutchman, died before him—of seeing the romantic and lyrical practice of his youth entirely set aside in favour of the rhetorical and artificial manner of the French, which, spreading over Europe like a plague, did not spare the literature of Holland, and this in spite of the Forty Years' War and all the personal hatred for France. In the year 1672, the poet Antonides, the last friend of Vondel, and lover of the old school, lamented that the whole literature of his country had become the ape of the French; and by the time of Vondel's death this sterile rhetoric had deformed every branch of letters and learning. A history of the lifetime of Joost van den Vondel is a chronicle of the whole rise and decline of the literature of Holland.

THE OERA LINDA BOOK.

We are accustomed to pride ourselves on the progress that we have made during the past century in the matter of critical insight. Without doubt the elements of technical knowledge are more widely spread than they were in the days of George Psalmanazar. We no longer believe in the highly-polished mahogany-coloured old masters that our forefathers cherished; we have reduced our belief in the music of the ancients to scientific limits; but it is questionable, after all, whether we are much less in thraldrom to tradition, or much more ready to give an independent opinion on an undiscussed subject, than our ancestors of the eighteenth century were. In the particular matter of literary forgeries, it is hard to say positively whether our generation would or would not be deceived by the productions of a Chatterton or a Walpole whose skill and learning were in due ratio advanced beyond the average culture of a hundred years ago. It is more a question, perhaps, of ingenuity in the forger than of intuition in the reader. A blunderer like Ireland is detected almost at once; and there has never, in all probability, been a believer in 'Vortigern' since the solitary performance of that unique drama. On the other hand there are still people of educa-

tion and taste who uphold the comedies of the Terentian nun Hroswitha, and pin their faith to the antiquity of Clotilde de Surville. These celebrated productions may be said to reach the high-water mark of intelligent forgery; their inherent value is so great that there may always be admirers too blind to be critical. But it is one thing to be delighted with a rondeau like 'Au clair de lune,' and another to be taken in by a 'History of Formosa' in the language of that island. Yet there is just now being circulated and discussed throughout the learned societies of the North of Europe a hoax that bears a remarkable likeness to the geographical and linguistical revelations of the mysterious Mr. George Psalmanazar.

The 'Oera Linda Book'—which, from being translated out of Frisian into Dutch and German, has now been exalted into an English translation, and which is expected by its faithful band of admirers presently to revolutionise the history of Europe—has had a variety of evasive stages in its long and singular history. As at present published it is understood to be taken from a MS. of the thirteenth century, and its more rational adherents no longer seek to claim for it a greater antiquity. But when it first appeared on the scenes, and indeed still in Friesland itself, no more modest pretensions were put forth on its behalf than that it was 'the oldest production, after Homer and Hesiod, of European literature.' It can be imagined what excitement has been caused by the sudden appearance on the quiet horizon of Frisian letters of a meteor so portentous as this. It is well known that the industrious and intelligent inhabitants of the north-eastern provinces of Holland preserve in remarkable purity the

old Frisian language; and that, though Dutch has superseded it in the towns and in business relations, yet that a strong conservative process is going on there as elsewhere in Europe, having for its object a patriotic preservation of the national language, laws, and customs. The capital of this peculiar district, Leeuwarden, boasts a variety of Frisian institutions, and the strength of feeling and the literary activity of the people has been more obvious than their critical acumen in this wordy warfare about the 'Oera Linda Book.' Friesland is by no means ready to allow itself to be snuffed out by its wealthier and more influential neighbours. It claims for itself and its language all the dignity due to a most ancient noble stock fallen into decay. It produces learned little books, intended as trumpet-blasts to waken slumbering philology, and bearing such titles as the 'Old Friesic above all others the Fons et Origo of the Old English, and Archaic'—little books which are too apt to give an uncertain sound when the supreme moment of trumpeting arrives. Friesland, moreover, does not forget that it has twice contributed a great name to European poetry and art: in the sixteenth century, Gijsbert Japix; in the nineteenth, Laurence Alma Tadema. In the ferment of patriotic feeling it becomes quite a sin against the fatherland not to believe in any great memorial of the national glory. As we shall see, if only the 'Oera Linda Book' were trustworthy, Greece and Egypt and Rome would be obliged to come down from their pedestals of honour, and do obeisance. Friesland is thirsty after national glory, and a MS. suddenly appears, showering a whole deity of magnificence into the lap of its respectable and sleepy history. That it

should be difficult to be critical under such circumstances is pardonable; and yet the 'Oera Linda Book' might have taxed our credulity a little less. With the sincerest affection for Friesland, this is too much:—'Hitherto we have believed that the historical records of our people reach no farther back than the arrival of Friso, the presumptive founder of the Frisians; whereas here we become aware that their records mount up to more than 2,000 years before Christ, surpassing the antiquity of Hellas, and equalling that of Israel!' This is a quotation from a paper read by a well-known scholar before a meeting of the Frisian Society, at Leeuwarden, in 1871, and warmly commended by all present. These are big words, and we cannot do better than examine the document on which such assumptions are founded.

In the first place, the publisher of the 'Oera Linda Book' has an advantage over Mr. Macpherson and other producers of strange works, in that the ancient MS. from which he took his text has not been burned to ashes at the moment when the task of transcription was complete, or been stolen and destroyed by some person ignorant of its value, or even carried up into heaven by a young gentleman with wings, as befell the hapless golden books of the Mormons. None of these unfortunate accidents has arrived to baffle students of primeval Frisian history. The 'Oera Linda' MS. remains in the possession of Mr. C. Over de Linden, Chief Superintendent of the Royal Dockyard at the Helder. Some rather scrappy information has been published, from which we gather that the present possessor received the MS., in August, 1848 (we are very particular about dates), from his aunt,

Mrs. Aafje Meylhoff, who had preserved it for twenty-eight years in her house at Enkhuizen, in Friesland. This takes us back to 1820; and we learn that on April 15 of that year it was delivered to Mrs. Meylhoff, then Miss Aafje Over de Linden, by her father, Mr. Andries Over de Linden, at his death. Here the chain breaks, and we are blandly told that the document had been handed down to the last-named gentleman by generation after generation from time immemorial. The tradition of the great antiquity of this record seems to have been accepted by the family; but no attempt was made to decipher or analyse it until Dr. E. Verwijs requested permission, about ten years ago, to examine the MS. He, we are told, 'immediately recognised it as very ancient Fries.' A letter at the commencement, which we shall presently examine, gave the year 1256 as that of the present copy, attributing the actual composition to a certain Adela, who lived and wrote about twenty centuries and a half before the Christian era, and to some other persons of a less extreme antiquity. This record, consequently, assumes to be 3,900 years old in its contents, and to belong to the thirteenth century in its present and physical form. It is a large quarto volume, *of cotton paper*, and written upon with large uncial letters in a previously unknown, but easy and consistent, alphabet. As a specimen of thoroughly intelligent modern criticism, I will quote at this juncture some remarks by the Frisian enthusiast, Dr. Ottema, who first saw the book through the press:—

In old writings the ink is very black or brown; but while there has been more writing since the thirteenth century, the colour of the ink is often grey or yellowish, and sometimes quite pale, showing that

it contains iron. All this affords convincing proof that the manuscript before us belongs to the middle of the thirteenth century, written with clear black letters between fine lines carefully traced with lead. The colour of the ink shows decidedly that it does not contain iron. By these evidences the date given, 1256, is satisfactorily proved, and it is impossible to assign any later date. *Therefore all suspicion of modern deception vanishes.*

Was there ever such a sweet simplicity in any man since that poor dear Abbé blinded himself in deciphering the scribblings of a German schoolboy in the Mexican Cave! Here is a man after Horace Walpole's own heart. Dr. Ottema is a phenomenon in the modern life of a European philosopher. He ought to have been a don at Oxford when George Psalmanazar was made Professor of Formosan. I return again and again to this reminiscence. There seems to me no parallel in literary history closer than that between the eighteenth-century 'History of Formosa' and this 'Pre-historic Chronicle of Friesland' in our own days; and when I find Dr. Ottema saying, as he does, 'As a specimen of antiquity in language and writing, I believe I may venture to say that this book is unique of its kind,' I cannot help pausing to call his attention to that earlier and once so famous masterpiece.

The letter which claims 1256 as the date of the MS., and which all the Frisian scholars point to with especial insistence, it may be as well to quote here in full and literal translation:—

Okke, my Son,—These books thou must preserve with body and soul. They contain the history of all our folk and of our ancestors. Last year I saved them out of the flood with thee and thy mother. Then they became wetted; they in consequence began to perish. In order not to lose them I have copied them on to foreign paper (*vp wrlandisk pampyer*). In case thou inheritest them, thou also must copy them. Thy children also, that they may never be destroyed.

Written at Ljuwert. After Atland sank the three thousand four hundred and forty-ninth year; that is, after Christian reckoning, the twelve hundred six and fiftieth year.

(Signed) HIDDE, surnamed OERA LINDA. Watch.

Below this, and, as far as we can discover, written on the same paper, is a letter dated four hundred years earlier. This also has a peculiar importance. It reads as follows:—

Beloved Successors,—For the sake of our dear forefathers, and of our dear liberty, I entreat you a thousand times never let the eye of a monk look on these writings. They are very insinuating, but they destroy in an underhand way all that relates to us Frisians. In order to gain rich benefices, they conspire with foreign kings, who know that we are their greatest enemies because we dare to speak to their people of liberty, rights, and duties of princes. Therefore they seek to destroy all that we derive from our forefathers, and all that is left of our old customs.

Ah! my beloved ones! I have visited their courts! If Wr-alda permits it, and we do not show ourselves strong to resist, they will altogether exterminate us.

Written at Ljudwerd. Eight hundred and three years after Christ.

LIKO, surnamed OVIRA LINDA.

It will be noticed that an air of superior archaism is introduced by the spelling of the signature, *Ovira Linda*, in 803, becoming *Oera Linda* in 1256. Unfortunately this difference of language is not kept up consistently, exactly the same forms and the same spelling occurring in the first document as in the last; this paradox being the result, that during the four centuries in which the Gothic languages were undergoing the most rapid and complete transfiguration, the Frisian dialect alone preserved its forms with inflexible rigidity; which is absurd.

The narrative is opened with very considerable in-

genuity. In order to avoid the awkwardness of an introduction we are suddenly plunged into the middle of things. Adela, the priestess-prophetess, is discoursing, and we learn from her words that a crisis has just taken place in the Frisian polity. The commander Magy, for whose name an ingenious Dutch note accounts by saying 'King of the Magjars or Finns,' has murdered the Folksmother, or female president of the Frisian Commonwealth. On this deed of violence other misfortunes have followed, and the same 'Magjars or Finns' have wrested from Friesland all the lands beyond the Weser. To stem the tide of conquest, and to consider in what way best to prevent the total extinction of the Frisian power, a council is called of the sovereign women and the men who hold office under them. We see at once that we have before us the curious idea of a republic governed by august maidens. At this council Adela rises and demands a hearing, and recapitulates for the benefit of her people, and for our amusement, the various matters that follow. She opens with a denunciation of the infidel policy which has disregarded the commands of the tutelary goddess Frya, and has negligently relaxed those god-given laws on which the whole framework of the community subsists. She harangues the assembly with very considerable eloquence, and charges the maidens to carry out instant reforms. They are to visit all the citadels, and to write down the Laws of Frya on the walls of each. The internal machinery of government is to be subdivided and put into full working order, and this significant exhortation is subjoined:—

If I might add more, I would recommend that all respectable girls in the towns should be taught; for I say positively, and time will

show it, that if you wish to remain true children of Frya never to be vanquished by fraud or arms, you must take care to bring up your daughters as true Frya's daughters.

And this, which sounds sweet in the ears of Leeuwarden to-day:—

You must teach the children how great our country has been, what great men our forefathers were, how great we still are if we compare ourselves to others.

Adela's advice, we are told, was followed, and a tedious list of apparently meaningless names is added in due course. Then an account is given of the earliest history of Friesland: how Wr-alda, the Infinitely Old, the only eternal and good God, breathed upon the Earth so that she brought forth three maiden daughters, Lyda the fierce, Finda the sweet-voiced and treacherous, and Frya the mild and beneficent. The description of Frya has a real charm of style in it. Her body is of the colour of snow at sunrise. Her hair, as fine as a spider's web, shines like the sun itself. When she opens her lips, the birds stop singing, and not a leaf rustles in the forest; the lion lies down at her feet, and the asp forgets its poison. She has three lessons for her children: the first is self-control, and the second the love of virtue, and the third the value of freedom; for, she says, 'Without liberty all other virtues serve to make you slaves.' When she had gathered around her her children to the seventh generation, she was taken suddenly up to heaven and made divine. Her children were gathered around her, when suddenly she was not. The earth shook, the air grew black and leaf-green with tears, and at last, as they gazed upwards, they saw the lightning flash out for one moment the word 'Watch' written across the firmament. Her

children consoled themselves by building a great citadel, on which they wrote her laws, called the Tex. They are the Frisians of this wondrous history.

After this prologue the Laws themselves, Frya's Tex, are given in full. Here the 'Oera Linda Book' challenges comparison with the most important fragment of genuine mediæval Frisian which we possess—the Old Laws of Friesland, put down at various times during the Middle Ages, but all claiming to have been originally drawn up by Charlemagne. There is no doubt whatever of the genuine authenticity of these very remarkable documents; and in point of style they resemble, sometimes very closely, this primæval Tex of Frya. The old Frisian laws were printed so early as the end of the fifteenth century; again revived, they were published by Christian Schotanus, in 1664, in his 'Description of the Glory of Friesland.' More than a century elapsed before they were printed again; and then they appeared in the form which I have before me at this moment, printed at Campen and Leeuwarden, in 1782, by J. A de Chalmot and J. Seydel. This edition of the Old Frisian Laws is worthy of some note; it might even suggest itself to a sceptical mind to inquire whether this volume was not the real nucleus and 'fons et origo,' to use the true Frisian phrase, of Adela and Frya and the whole structure of the 'Oera Linda Book.'

It must be understood, however, that the compilers of the Old Laws knew no such strange gods as Linda and Wr-alda. Their straightforward statement, on the contrary, opens thus:—'To the honour of God, of his dear mother Mary, and of the whole heavenly host, and of all free Frisian freedom.' These last words, on which much

interesting speculation might be founded, reveal to us a high level of national vitality at that early period. The sturdy alliterativeness, *alre fria Fresena fridam*, has in itself the ring of a watchword, and a noble music of liberty in it. Again and again it is repeated, and throughout the code *Di fria Fresa*, the free Frisian, is invariably used for citizen or inhabitant.

Either this characteristic is of an infinite age, or the Oera Linda has cunningly borrowed it, for the Tex abounds in such spirited enactments as this:—

> If any man shall deprive another, even his debtor, of his liberty, let him be to you as a vile slave; and I advise you to burn his body and that of his mother in an open place, and bury them fifty feet below the ground, so that no grass shall grow upon them. It would poison your cattle.

There is something 'sans-culottish' about this. This lawgiver has the soul of a Robespierre. Again we note the date of the edition of the Frisian Laws, 1782.

We now come to the passages which are wholly ridiculous, if taken in the serious, historical way affected by Dr. Ottema and his Frisian friends, and which might have shown them, without a moment's hesitation, that, whatever the MS. was, it was a relation not of fact, but of fiction. We are told that Minno, obviously Minos, was a Frisian king, born at Lindawrda in Friesland, and that he wandered about the world till he came to Kreta, where he gave laws to the inhabitants. An extract from his institutions has a good deal of the antique Teuton flavour about it:—

> The toad blows himself out, but he can only crawl. The frog cries, 'Work, work,' but he can do nothing but hop and make him-

self ridiculous. The raven cries 'Spare, spare' (spâr, spâr), but he steals and wastes everything that he gets into his beak.

Minos settled a Frisian colony in Kreta, and, returning home, left a virgin ruler to govern the island in his stead. Her suggestive title was Nyhellenia; but her real name, we are told, was Min-Erva. There is here some obscurity in the narrative; but, if we understand aright the meaning of the author, this lady Min-Erva, in her turn, sailed from Kreta and settled in Krekalanda. A Dutch note to the Frisian text kindly explains that 'Krekaland means Magna Grecia, as well as Greece.' We feel a curiosity to know who supplied this note, and from what authority. Min-Erva teaches the Krekalanders to worship one God; to be wise and self-restrained, and tolerant.

At this point there comes a break, and the story is told, in somewhat different fashion, in the form of an extract of some autobiography of Minos. It is primarily interesting because he says that he started from 'Athenia' on his way to Kreta, and thus supplies us with another familiar name. The historical style of the author is very molluscous, and we find it difficult to state precisely what he intends us to learn. This passage, however, is plainly enough intended to add an original testimony to the fact of the disappearance of that mysterious continent of Atlantis whither the ancients timidly set sail to gather precious dragon's blood, and of which it has been supposed that the Azores and the Canaries, Madeira and the Cape Verdes, are the loftiest summits, too high to be submerged:—

Now the bad time came. During the whole summer the sun had been hid behind the clouds, as if unwilling to look upon the earth.

There was perpetual calm, and the damp mist hung like a wet sail over the houses and the marshes. The air was heavy and oppressive, and in men's hearts was neither joy nor cheerfulness. In the midst of this stillness the earth began to tremble as if she were dying. The mountains opened to vomit forth fire and flames. Some sank into the bosom of the earth, and in other places mountains rose out of the plain. Aldland, called by the seafaring people Atland, disappeared, and the wild waves rose so high over hill and dale that everything was buried in the sea. Many people were swallowed up by the earth, and others who had escaped the fire perished in the water. It was not only in Finda's land that the earth vomited fire, but also in Twiskland. Whole forests were burned one after another, and when the wind blew from that quarter our land was covered with ashes. Rivers changed their course, and at their mouths new islands were formed of sand and drift.

Twiskland is Germany. We seem, in the early part of this description, to be listening to a man whose imagination was full of the horrors of the earthquake at Lisbon.

One hundred and one years after the event just recorded, we are told, a people came up out of the East, driven onward by another people. They called themselves Magjars, and their king was named Magy. We now find ourselves brought down to the age of Adela herself, who began her narration thirty years after the murder of the Volksmoeder by the commander of the Magjars. We can therefore supply some outlines of chronology; for since Hiddo Oera Linda made the present copy of the MS. in 'the three thousand four hundred and forty-ninth year after Atland was submerged'—that is, in A.D. 1256—the date of the disappearance of Atlantis may be placed at B.C. 2193, the incursion of the Magjars at B.C. 2092, and the event narrated so suddenly at the opening of the book in B.C. 2062. In the year B.C. 1982, then, to continue the Oera Linda chronology, Wodin, a Danish viking, invited by

the Frisians, went out to fight the Magjars, and, after repulsing them for some time, was captured by them and—made their king. We are next introduced to two Frisian brothers, Nef Tunis and Inka, who start for the southern seas to win their fortunes; they proceed together in amity as far as a town in Spain, called Kadik, where there is a stone quay. It is very instructive to note that nearly two thousand years before the Christian era, Cadiz existed and flourished. Here they fell to a disagreement, and it was determined that one brother should go west, the other east. Inka, accordingly, set out to try whether there might not be, far beyond the Hesperides, some remnant of the vanished Atlantis. The 'Oera Linda Book' says that he was never heard of again, but I am inclined to think that we have met with him in the history of Peru. Nef Tunis went eastward up the Mediterranean, and after divers troubles arrived, in the year B.C. 2000, at 'an island with two deep bays so that there appeared to be three islands. In the middle one they established themselves, and afterwards built a city wall round the place. Then they wanted to give it a name, but disagreed about it. Some wanted to call it Fryasburch, others Nef Tunia (!); but the Magjars and Finns begged that it might be called Thyrhisburch.' The Dutch annotator has again been afraid that we should not recognise this name, and has added 'Tyrus.'

With the inhabitants of the coast, and as far as the town of Sydon, they traded, exchanging amber and iron for wine, honey, and various products of the land. It is a pity that they did not elect the name Neftunia; it would have formed an elegant pendant to Min-Erva!

We meet with other familiar names as we proceed—Athens, Ulysus, Troja, and so on; but we find nothing very important or interesting till near the end of the first part, the Book of Adela. This, as being in my opinion the most vigorous episode in the work, I give in summary.

One stormy winter night the watchman on the citadel of Texland heard, above the roar of the tempest and the sea, a noise of ruin in the watch-tower. In another moment he saw the sacred immortal light fall from its high station on to the bastion, and by its glare he saw thousands of men battering the gates and scaling the walls. Without a moment's warning war had fallen upon the Frisian people. It was the old foe, Magy, come with a fleet of light vessels to steal the sacred lamp. The watchman gave the alarm, but it was too late; the multitudes rushed into the city, and one brutal Finn pierced to the chamber of the Mother herself. He ran a sword through her before a guardsman of her own could cleave his skull. Her still living body was borne on board the ship of Magy. When she was in measure restored, the insolent conqueror offered her humiliating terms for her life, and attempted to make use of her prophet's power. The dying maiden made as if she heard him not; but at last she took up her speech against him, and cried: 'Before seven days have passed, your soul shall haunt the tombs with the night-birds, and your body shall be at the bottom of the sea.' She fell fainting on the deck, and her captive maidens clustered around her; but the raging conqueror thrust them all aside, and bade his soldiers throw her still breathing body into the deep. This episode is invented

with extraordinary force and skill, and is well worthy of attention. In the figure of the Maiden, Mother of her People, the author whom Dr. Ottema and his friends traduce by supposing him capable of a monstrous chronicle, has not thought of history, but typifies from the point of view of a romance-writer the fervour of liberty, the passion of Frisian freedom and unity, which has always characterised this remarkable little nation. Judged as a romance, the 'Oera Linda Book' is a fairly interesting and novel Utopia; judged as a veracious piece of ancient history, it only casts ridicule on the critical faculty of those who have discussed it.

With the event last described, the Book of Adela closes; but not so the manuscript. A certain Adelbrost immediately takes up the thread, and states himself to be the son of Adela. But before he has written more than a page and a half, he comes to a horrid end. Two and thirty days after his mother's death, Adelbrost was found murdered on the wharf, his skull fractured, and his limbs torn asunder. It is his brother Apollonia, who continues the narrative, to whom we owe these harrowing particulars. After dwelling on them, he gives us an account of his mother Adela's death, who was also murdered by the Magjars. Friesland would seem to have fallen on very troublous times about the year B.C. 2000. We learn that Adela, like Queen Guenevere, was seven feet high, and that her wisdom exceeded her stature. There were giants on the earth in those days.

On the occasion of the death of Adela, there was inscribed on the outside wall of the city tower a long statement of religious opinion, which was to serve as doctrine

to the inhabitants. This is a sort of impersonal deistic creed, dealing more largely in morality than faith, and apparently the result of a well-digested course of the works of Jean Jacques Rousseau. We learn therefrom that the causes of sin are dulness, carelessness, and ignorance; that the principles of Calvinism and elective grace are base and false; and that the existence of man ought to be a constant advance towards that absolute perfection which is Wr-alda, or the One God; but that the human spirit is not the Spirit of God, but a shadow of it. There is also happily defined the familiar reflection that without the powers of the senses we should have had no proper thoughts at all. 'If Wr-alda had given us no organs, we should have known nothing, and been more irrational than a piece of seaweed driven up and down by the ebb and flood.'

It can serve no critical purpose to follow the disjointed narrative any farther. One narrator after another takes it up, recording the deeds of successive generations; but there is no alteration of style, and the characteristics of the history remain unaltered. An attempt to give an account, from the Frisian point of view, of the rise of the Christian religion, is grotesquely ingenious, and would hardly have disgraced a speculative encyclopædist. In the heart of Cashmere the daughter of a king brought forth a child, whose father was a high priest. To save herself from destruction the princess entrusted her babe to a poor couple, who brought him westward till he fell into the hands of a Frisian sailor, who taught him to value the wisdom of Texland, and become, in short, a good *fria Fresa*. There follows a piece of brilliant comparative

mythology, the force of which is less apparent in the English version, because Mr. Sandbach, in a fit of inexplicable prudery, has outraged the Frisian text by disguising the first name as Jessos :—

> His first name was Jes-us; but the priests, who hated him, called him Fo, that is, false; the people called him Kris-en (Krishna), that is, shepherd; and his Frisian friend called him Bûda (Buddha), purse, because he had in his head a treasure of wisdom, and in his heart a treasure of love.

This fourfold deity combines in himself all the virtues of the Orient, and the benefits of four great philosophic systems. Shortly after his death we find kingly tyranny and priestly aggression, the two great bugbears of the author of the 'Oera Linda Book,' rapidly undoing all the lovely work of the man-god's blameless life, and the rhetoric rises to passionate eloquence as the corruption and enthralment of the world are bewailed.

Soon after this lyric outburst the narrative incontinently closes in the middle of a sentence, and the weary reader hardly wishes it completed. The monotony of the style has been excessive, and the invention has seldom had the power of riveting the student's attention or persuading his conviction.

In summing up, this much-discussed MS. chronicle of primæval history must be regarded as a romance of the end of the last century, written in all probability by a radical and free-thinker whose mind was steeped in the sceptical ideas of the eighteenth century, but still more in the intense and passionate patriotism which has never ceased to characterise the Frisian people. He was evidently a man of learning and talent, but of no genius;

for a man of genius would have arranged his narrative with more art, would have given it shape and proportion, and would have set here and there some jewel of suggestion or insight which would have constrained our belief, though only for a moment. These gifts we cannot recognise in the writer of the Oera Linda MS. His book is replete with feeling, elevation, and sentiment: it is, above all, what the Germans call a *Tendenz-Buch*; it strives to teach an earnest moral lesson in the form of a romance. All this is characteristic of the period to which I am inclined to assign its authorship. I would go farther, and dare to conjecture that its composition dates from the earliest years of reaction, when the ideas of the Encyclopædia had fully blossomed in the French Revolution, and had borne such bitter fruit that men began, still clinging fast to Rousseau, to give up all other free-thinking supports, and return to a modified deism and a modified conservatism. The tide once turned, the flood rushed back with violence; in a few years Joseph de Maistre and Chateaubriand were the leaders of opinion. The 'Oera Linda Book' seems to me to mark the instant of reaction, and to stand midway between Diderot and the Seraphic Epos. But while giving the author credit, not only for most pure and exalted desires, but for very considerable talent and ingenuity in putting them forth, I am at a loss how to characterise the critics who have palmed this romance upon the world as a genuine primæval history. They are seriously to be blamed for having wasted their time in attempting to persuade European scholarship of the truth of such a frivolity—time that might better have been spent in discovering the exact date of composition

of the MS., and the name and purpose of its author. It is to be hoped that they will at length be persuaded to give their attention to this investigation. To find out who wrote the 'Oera Linda Book,' and what its subsequent history has been, cannot, to say the least, be more difficult than to discover what song the Sirens sang to Ulysses; and this we know, on the authority of Sir Thomas Brown, is a legitimate subject for scientific inquiry.

The above was written in the early part of 1876, and was received here and still more in Holland with reproaches against what was termed its extravagant scepticism. But a French critic, M. Jules Andrieu, in the summer of the same year, in a very grave and learned analysis of the 'Oera Linda Book,' rejected, as I had done, without discussion, the assumption of the great antiquity of the MS., but was inclined to place the date of composition at the end of the seventeenth, and not of the eighteenth century. He cited a variety of passages showing beyond a doubt that the author was largely indebted to the 'Atland eller Manheim' of Olof Rudbeck the elder, to the 'Origo rerum Celticarum et Belgicarum' of Adriaan Schrieck, and to the 'Becceselana' of Goropius Becanus, all of them pedantic and now forgotten monuments of the lumbering learning and false philology of the seventeenth century. M. Andrieu seemed to prove so conclusively that the 'Oera Linda Book' was the work of a man who had outlived the murder of the brothers De Witt, that I was afraid I had been, as they said, too sceptical. But there followed a pamphlet by a

professor at Haarlem, Dr. Beckering Vincker, which fully bore out my original view, and went even farther. In this little work, entitled 'De Onechtheid van het Oera Linda-Bôk' (The Oera Linda Book not genuine), the Frisian style was minutely and trenchantly criticised, and the utter worthlessness of its pretensions to antiquity exposed. Dr. Vincker was inclined to consider the date of composition posterior to 1853. Mr. C. Over de Linden being now dead, his son Leendert Flores Over de Linden was persuaded to send a page of the MS. to be examined by a famous expert at Amsterdam. He gave a very decided opinion that the writing was certainly not more than seventy-five, and perhaps only twenty-five years old. Before communicating this reply, however, to the Over de Linden family, he sent on the page to the head of the great paper factory at Apeldoorn, and received from him the opinion that the paper in question was undoubtedly fabricated at the factory of Messrs. Zielens & Schrammen, about the year 1845. It is now very generally supposed that the MS. was written about 1848 by Mr. C. Over de Linden in his official rooms at the Helder. The 'Oera Linda Book' is thus an exploded antiquity, but as a curious piece of Frisian literature it may still be read with interest, especially as a few farces, some translations, and the poems of Gijsbert Japix are the only specimens of *belles-lettres* to attract a student to the language.

APPENDIX.

TEXT OF THE POEMS TRANSLATED.

A.

Atter hæved
Sig min Sjel. Jeg Svalen saae,
Sænkende sig under over
Skyens melkehvide Vover,
Og jeg frydedes paany.
Hvor den svæved!
Hvor den svinged i det Blaa,
Solforgyldt, skjöndt i sit Gry
Solen bagom Aasen laae!
Hvor den svinged! hvor den svæved,
Somom den optrak i Luften
Med sin blanke
Vingespids et straalelet
Gylden-og blaastribet Net!
Jeg den fulgte med min Tanke,
Hvor dens Flugt mon videst vanke,
Hvor de Balsamdryp, den bar,
Foran tindred
Som et Tvillingstjernepar.

WERGELAND: *Svalen*, ii. 131–149.

B.

Hvor i blaanende Geled
Alper frem af Dalen stige,—
Hvor ved den krystalne Bræ
Blomstrer snehvidt Abildtræ,
Medens i en Snefonns Spor
Vilde Rose lystigt groer,—
Hvor en Kilde først sin Sang
Kun mundharpespæd begynder
Murmlende blandt Mos og Stene
Men saa under Orregrene
Fra sin Afdal ud sig skynder,
Dreven af ungdomlig Trang
Til med Hoveddalens Ynder
I sin Glands sig at forene;
Og, liig David Harpeslager,
Fra en Hyrde bleven til
Dalens Konning ved sit Spil
Stolt og mægtig gjennemdrager
Alt sit skjönne Rige, Dalen.

WERGELAND: *Den engelske Lods*, xi. 55–73.

C. – *TIL MIN GYLDENLAK.*

Gyldenlak, för Du din Glands har tabt
Da er jeg Det hvoraf Alt er skabt;
Ja, för Du mister din Krones Guld,
Da er jeg Muld.

Idet jeg raaber: med Vindvet op!
Mit sidste Blik faaer din Gyldentop.
Min Sjæl dig kysser, idet forbi
Den flyver fri.

Togange jeg kysser din söde Mund;
Dit er det förste med Rettens Grund,
Det andet give du, Kjære husk,
Min Rosenbusk!

Udsprungen faaer jeg den ei at see;
Thi bring min Hilsen, naar det vil skee
Og siig, jeg önsker, at paa min Grav
Den blomstrer af.

Ja siig, jeg önsker, at paa minBryst.
Den Rose laa, du fra mig har kyst;
Og, Gyldenlak, vær i Dödens Huus
Dens Brudeblus!

WERGELAND: *Fra Dödslejet.*

D.—*AFTENSTEMNING.*

Nu synker Aftenen sagte ned
Med gylden Rödme paa Sö og Lier,
Og lydlös Taushed og yndig Fred
Til rolig Slummer Naturen vier.
De grönne Strande
Sig stille blande
I Söens Spil med de blanke Vande,
Der fange dem.

Se Fiskerbaaden hvor slank og let,
Höit paa den glimrende Flade baaren,
Hvor Karlen böier sig mod sit Net,
Men stille Pigerne holde Aaren.
Den tause Tale
Fra Sö og Dale
Al Dagens Higen har kunnet svale,
Og binde dem.

Men södt hensunken en Pige staar
Og fremad ser i den klare Himmel,
Mens længselsvakt hendes Tanke gaar
Til Julelegen og Dandsens Vrimmel.
Den röde Lue
Paa Aftenens Bue
Har kastet Funkler vi ej kan skue—
Hun stirrer ud.

Du rige, rödmende Sommernat,
De eier Meer end de lyse Dage,
O, bring den Fagre din bedste Skat,
Lad Drömmen kjærlig til hende drage:
Naar snart de lande
Ved grönne Strande,
Læg Sölverkronen om hendes Pande
Som salig Brud!

MOE: *Blandede lyriske Digte.*

E.

I Skogen Smaagutten gik Dagen lang;
Der havde han hört slig en underlig Sang.

Gutten en Flöjte af Selju skar,—
Og pröved, om Tonen derinde var.

Tonen den hvisked' og nævnte sig;
Men bedst som han lytted,' den löb sin Vej.

Tit, naar han sov, den til ham smög,'
Og over hans Pande med Elskov strög.

Vilde den fange og vaagned' brat;
Men Tonen hang fast i den blege Nat.

Herre, min Gud, tag mig derind;
Thi Tonen har faaet mit hele Sind,

Herren han svared' : ' Den er din Ven,
Skjönt aldrig en Time du ejer den.

' Alle de andre dog lidt forslaar
Mod denne, du söger, men aldrig naar ! '

BJÖRNSON : *Arne*, xiv.

F.

Solglad Dag i hegnet Have
Skabtes dig till Lyst og Leg ;
Tænk ej paa, at Höstens Gave
Tidtnok Vaarens Löfter sveg.
Æbleblomsten, hvid og vakker,
Breder over dig sit Tjeld,—
Lad den saa langs alle Bakker
Drysses vejrslaat næste Kveld !

Hvad vil du om Frugten spörge
Midt i Træets Blomstertid ?
Hvorfor sukke, hvorfor sörge,
Slövet under Slæb og Slid ?
Hvorfor lade Fugleskræmmen
Klappre Dag og Natt paa Stang !
Glade Broder, Fuglestemmen
Ejer dog en bedre Klang !

Hvorfor vil du Spurven jage
Fra din rige Blomstergren !
Lad den för som Sanglön tage
Din Forhaabning en for en.
Tro mig, du ved Byttet vinder,
Tusker Sang mod sildig Frugt :
Husk Moralen ' Tiden rinder ; '
Snart din Friluftslund er lukkt.

Jeg vil leve, jeg vil synge,
Til den dör, den sidste Hækk ;
Fej da tröstig alt i Dynge,
Kast saa hele Stadsen væk.
Grinden op ; lad Faar og Kviger
Gramse graadigt, hver som bedst ;
Jeg bröd Blomsten ; lidt det siger,
Hvem der tar den döde Rest!

IBSEN : *Kjærlighedens Komedie*, i.

G.

STYVER.

Ja, det var nu i
Den Tid, jeg var forelsket.

FALK.

Er da den forbi ?
Jeg trode ej din Elskovsrus udsovet !

STYVER.

Nu er jeg jo officielt *forlovet* ;
Det er jo mere end *forelsket*, ved jeg !

IBSEN : *Kjærlighedens Komedie*, i.

H.

FALK.

Det gjör hver Glædens Rigmand till en Tigger !
Hvis jeg som Sprogets Sultan maatte raade
En Time kun, det Silkesnoren fik,
Og skulde ud af Verden uden Naade.

STYVER.

Hvad har du da imod det Haabets Ord ?

FALK.

At det formörker os Guds fagre Jord.
'Vor næste Kjærlighed,' 'vor næste Viv,'
'Vor næste Maaltid' og 'vor næste Liv,'
Se, den *Forsynlighed*, som heri ligger,
Den er det, som gjör Glædens Sön till Tigger.
Saalangt du ser, forstygger den vor Tid,
Den dræber Nydelsen af Öjeblikket;
Du har ej Ro för du faar Baaden vrikket
Imod 'den næste' Strand med Slæb og Slid:
Men er du fremme—mon du *da* tör hvile?
Nej, du maa atter mod et 'Næste' ile.
Og saadan gaar det—fortvæk—udaf Livet,—
Gud ved, om bag et Stoppested er givet.

FRÖKEN SKJÆRE.

Men fy, Herr Falk, hvor kan De tale saa!
Sligt maa min Kjæreste ej höre paa,
Han er excentrisk nok.—Aa hör, min Kjære;
Kom hid et Öjeblik!

STYVER (*beskjæftiget med at rense sin Pibespids*).

Jeg kommer snart.

IBSEN: *Kjærlighedens Komedie*, i.

I.

Saa ubarmhjertigt, som en strasburgsk Gaas,
Med rimet Sludder og med metrisk Vaas,
Saa alt hans Indre, Lever, Sjæl og Kraas,
Naar ud det krænges, findes ganske fuldt
Af lyrisk Ister og rethorisk Smult.

IBSEN: *Kjærlighedens Komedie*, i.

J.

Dækk mine Öjnes Spejl med Blindheds Skimmel,
Saa skal jeg digte om den lyse Himmel.
Skaff mig, om blot en Maanedstid paa Borg,
En Kval, en knusende, en Kjæmpesorg,
Saa skal jeg synge Livets Jubel ud.
Og helst, min Fröken, skaff mig blot en Brud.

IBSEN: *Kjærlighedens Komedie*, i.

K.

SVANHILD.

Da Troen truedes ifjor i Syrien,
Gik De da did som Korsets svorne Mand?
Nej, paa Papiret var De varm som Taler,—
Og sendte 'Kirketidenden' en Daler.

(FALK *gaar oppover i Haven*).

Falk, er De vred?

FALK.

Nej visst; jeg gaar og sturer,—
Se, det er alt.

SVANHILD.

De er som to Naturer—
To uforligte—

FALK.

Ja det ved jeg vel.

SVANHILD.

Men Grunden!

FALK.

Grunden? Jo, fordi jeg hader
At gaa omkring med frækt udringet Sjæl,

Lig Godtfolks Kjærlighed i alle Gader,—
At gaa omkring med blottet Hjertevarme,
Som unge Kvinder gaar med nögne Arme!
De var de eneste,—De, Svanhild, De,—
Saa tænkte jeg,—naa den Ting er forbi—
(*Hun gaar over og seer ud*).
De lytter?

SVANHILD.

Till en anden Röst, som taler,
Hyss! Hörer De? Hver Kveld, naar Solen daler,
Da kommer flyvende en liden Fugl,—
Se *der*,—der kom den frem af Lövets Skjul,—
Ved De, hvad fuldt og fast jeg tror? Hver den,
Som her paa Jord blev nægtet Sangens Gave,
Hun fik af Gud en liden Fugl till Ven,
För en kun skabt og for den enes Have.

FALK

(*tager en Sten opp fra Jorden*).
Da gjælder det, at Fugl og Ejer mödes,
Skal ej dens Sang i fremmed Have ödes.

SVANHILD.

Ja, det er sandt! men jeg har fundet min.
Jeg fik, ej Ordets Magt, ej Sangerstemme;
Men kviddrer Fuglen i sit grönne Gjemme,
Det er som Digte daled i mit Sind—
(FALK *kaster Stenen;* SVANHILD *udstöder et Skrig.*)
O Gud, der slog De den! Hvad har De gjort!
O det var syndigt, syndigt!

FALK (*i lidenskabeligt Opprör*).
Nej—kun Öje
For Öje, Svanhild—ikkun Tand for Tand!
Nu faar De ingen Hilsen fra det höje,
Og ingen Gave mer fra Sangens Land.
Se, det er Hævnen over Deres Værk!

SVANHILD.

Mit Værk?

FALK.

Ja Deres! Indtill denne Time
Slog i mit Bryst en Sangfugl kjækk og stærk.
Se—nu kan Klokken over begge kime,
De har den dræbt!

SVANHILD.

Har jeg!

FALK.

Ja, da De slog
Min unge, glade Sejerstro till Jorden
Da De *forloved* Dem!

IBSEN: *Kjærlighedens Komedie*, i.

L.

Han fordum var paa Mod so rig;
Han stred med Verden om en elsket Kvinde;
Som Vedtægts Kirkestormer Manden gjaldt,
Hans Kjærlighed slog ud i glade Sange!
Se paa ham nu! I Kisteklæder lange,
Et Tobensdrama om hvor dybt han faldt!
Og Fruentimret med de slukne Skjört,
Med skjæve Sko, som klasker under Hælene,
Hun er den Vingemö, som skulde fört
Ham ind till Samfundsliv med Skönhedssjælene.
Hvan er igjen af Flammen? Nëppe Rögen!
Sit transit gloria amoris, Fröken!

IBSEN: *Kjærlighedens Komedie*, i.

M.

Vi vil ej sogne mer till Platheds Kirke,
Som Led af Trivialitetens Menighed!

Se, Maalet for Personlighedens Virke
Er dog at staa selvstændig, sand og fri.
IBSEN: *Kjærlighedens Komedie*, i.

N.

FALK.

Saa mange Hoveder, saa mange Sind!
Nej, alle famler de paa gale Veje.
Hver Lignelse er skjæv; men hör nu min;—
Den kan paa hver en Vis De sno og dreje.
Der gror en Plante i det fjerne Öst;
Dens Odelshjem er Solens Fætters Have—

DAMERNE.

Aa, det er Theen!

FALK.

Ja . . .
Den har sit Hjem i Fabellandets Dale,
Vel tusind Mile bagom Örkner golde;—
Fyld Koppen, Lind! Saa Takk! Nu skal jeg holde
Om The og Kjærlighed en Thevandstale.
(*Gjæsterne rykker nærmere sammen*).
Den har sit Hjem i Eventyrets Land;
Ak *der* har ogsaa Kjærligheden hjemme.
Kun Solens Sönner, ved vi, fik Forstand
Paa Urtens Dyrkning, paa dens Rögt og Fremme.
Med Kjærligheden er det ligesaa.
En Draabe Solblod maa i Aaren slaa,
Hvis Kjærlighed skal skyde Rod derinde.
Skal grönnes, gro, og frem till Blomstring vinde.

. . . . .

FRÖKEN SKJÆRE.

Men Kjærlighed og Kjærlighed er et;
Af The der gives baade god og slett.

FRU STRAAMAND.

Ja, man har The i mange Kvaliteter.

ANNA.

De grönne Foraarsspirer allerförst—

SVANHILD.

Den Slags er kun for Solens Döttres Törst.

EN UNG DAME.

Man skildrer den berusende som Æther,—

EN ANDEN.

Som Lotos duftende, og söd som Mandelen.

GULDSTAD.

Den forekommer aldrig her i Handelen.

FALK.

Ak, mine Damer, hver i sin Natur
Har og et særligt lidet 'himmelsk Rige.'
Der knopped sig af Spirer tusind slige
Bag Blyheds faldende Kinesermur.
Men Fantasiens smaa Kineserdukker,
Som sidder i Kioskens Ly og sukker,
Som drömmer vidt—saa vidt—med Slör om Lænderne,
Med gyldne Tulipaners Flor i Hænderne,—
Till dem I Förstegrödens Knopper sanked.

. . . . . .

Og saa det siste store Lighedspunkt;
Se hvor Kulturens Haand har lagt sig tungt
Paa 'Himmelriget' i det fjerne Östen;
Dets Mur forfalder og dets Magt er sprængt,
Den sidste ægte Mandarin er hængt,
Profane Hænder alt besörger Hösten.
Snart 'Himlens Rige' er en Saga blot,
Et Eventyr, som ingen længer tror paa;

Den hele Verden er et graat i graat;
Vidunderlandet har vi kastet Jord paa.
Men har vi det, hvor er da Kjærligheden?
Ak, da er ogsaa den jo vandret heden.
Naa, lad forgaa, hvad Tiden ej kan bære;
En Thevandsskaal till salig Amors Ære!

IBSEN: *Kjærlighedens Komedie*, ii.

O.

EJNAR.

Agnes, min dejlige Sommerfugl,
Dig vil jeg legende fange!
Jeg fletter et Garn med Masker små
Og Maskerne er mine Sange.

AGNES.

Er jeg en Sommerfugl, liden og skær,
Så lad mig af Lyngtoppen drikke;
Og er du en Gut, som lyster en Leg,
Så *jag* mig, men *fang* mig ikke!

EJNAR.

Agnes, min dejlige Sommerfugl,
Nu har jeg Maskerne flettet;
Dig hjælper visst aldrig din flagrende Flugt,—
Snart sidder du fangen i Nettet!

AGNES.

Er jeg en Sommerfugl, ung og blank,
Jeg lystig i Legen mig svinger;
Men fanger du mig under Nettets Spind,
Så rör ikke ved mine Vinger.

EJNAR.

Nej, jeg skal löfte dig varligt på Hånd
Og lukke dig ind i mit Hjerte;
Der kan du lege dit hele Liv
Den gladeste Leg, du lærte!

IBSEN: *Brand*, i.

P.

PIGERNES KOR.

Profeten er kommen!
Profeten, Herren, den alting vidende,
Till os, till os, er han kommen,
Over Sandhavet ridende;
Profeten, Herren, den aldrig fejlende,
Till os, till os er han kommen
Gjennem Sandhavet sejlende!
Rör Flöjten og Trommen;
Profeten, Profeten er kommen!

ANITRA.

Hans Ganger er Mælken, den hvide,
Som strömmer i Paradisets Floder.
Böj eders Knæ! Sænk eders Hoder!
Hans Öjne er Stjerner, blinkende, blide.
Intet Jordbarn dog taaler
Glansens Glans af de Stjerners Straaler!
Gjennen Örken han kom.
Guld og Perler sprang frem paa hans Bryst.
Hvor han red blev det lyst.
Bag ham blev Mörke;
Bag ham foer Samum og Törke.
Han, den herlige, kom!
Gjennem Örken han kom,
Som en Jordsön pyntet.
Kaba, Kaba staar tom;—
Han har selv forkyndt det!

KOR.

Rör Flöjten og Trommen;
Profeten, Profeten er kommen!

IBSEN: *Peer Gynt*, iv.

Q.

HUHU.

Saa laan mig Öre—
Fjernt i Öst, som Krans om Pande,
Staar de malebarske Strande,
Portugiser og Hollænder
Landet med Kultur bespænder.
Desforuden boer der Skarer
Af de ægte Malebarer.
Disse Folk har Sproget blandet;
De er Herrer nu i Landet.
Men i Tiden længst forgangen
Raaded der Orangutangen,
Han var Skogens Mand og Herre;
Frit han turde slaa og snærre.
Som Naturens Haand ham skabte,
Saa han gren og saa han gabte.
Uforment han turde skrige;
Han var Hersker i sit Rige.
Ak, men saa kom Fremmedaaget
Og forplumred Urskogs-Sproget.
Firehundredaarig Natten
Ruged over Abekatten;
Skal vi vore Tanker male,
Maa det ske ved Hjælp af Tale.
Jeg har prövet paa at fægte
For vort Urskogs-Maal, det ægte,—
Prövet at belive Liget,—
Hævdet Folkets Rett till Skriget,—
Skreget selv, og paavist Trangen
Till dets Brug i Folkesangen.

IBSEN: *Peer Gynt*, iv.

R.

I Loufod Norden hen, i Norrigs Konge-riige,
Een Ström befindes stoor, som ej hâr mange Liige,
Den kaldes Moske-ström, af Mosker spits hin höje,
Som Strömmen runden om ret artig veed at plöje.
Naar denne gjör sin fliid oc Maanens Verk forretter,
Oc nogen kommer nær, hand Verden snart forgætter.
Den Bylge reis' i vær som andre Bierge höje,
Mand der igiennem kand see Soolen Verdens Öje.
Er Vinden Strömmen mod, to helte sammen riide,
Oc med sligt bulder stoor imod hver andre striide,
At Land oc Huus der ved, ja Dör oc Vindu ryste,
Oc tage saa af sted, som Jorden skulde bryste.
Den stærke Trolde-hval kand der ej giennem bryde,
Men trecker vred derfra, forfærdelig maae skryde.

ARREBO: *Hexaemeron*, ed. 1661, p. 102.

S.

Min Meening er der om, at der af Klipper höje
En Skærgaard i det Dyb maa sig tilhobe föje,
Som een Indkiörsel haer, men ellers steen berunded,
Oc midt i samme Gaard en runder Klippe fundet.
Naar Strömmen kommer nu, forfærdelig den bruuser,
Oc ind ad samme Poort som tusend fosse fuuser,
Oc ingen Udgang haer, den svirer oc regierer,
Oc höjen middel Steen ret runden om spatserer,
Thi snurrer den med Mact, som qværnen, naar mand maler.

ARREBO: *Hexaemeron*, ed. 1661, p. 103.

T.

Som då ett vårmoln hviler sin glans bland träden på kullen.
Buskarne fröjdas och björkarna stå i stilla förundran,

Skådande morgonens prakt och det rosenfärgade molnet.
Tills ur sitt sköte det sänder en fläkt, då svigta de späda
Grenarnes skott, och de krusiga löfven skälfva af vällust;
Mindre bäfvar också ej gossen, då Hedda han åhör.

RUNEBERG: *Elgskyttarne*, iii. 111–116.

U.

Icke så rik är på blommor en äng i den varmeste sommar,
Barn, som på glädje den väg, der vi gå mot grafven beständigt,
Endast vi akta oss väl, alt ej hoppet, det hala, bedrager;
Ty hvar vi stanna en stund att njuta en lycka, i blinken
Springer der hoppet förut och visar en bättre på afstånd.
Dåren följer den lysten från en till en annan och ratar,
Aldrig förnöjd, tills slutligt han suckande hinnes af döden.

RUNEBERG: *Elgskyttarne*, v. 345–351.

V.

Rodnande syntes hon der, i sin blyghet ljud till förundran:
Lik en strimma af sjön, som, af morgenstrålar begjuten,
Smyger sig in och rodnar emellan skuggiga lunder.

RUNEBERG: *Hanna*, i. 134–136.

W.

'Ser du den rodnande sjön,' så sade han, 'ser du, hur olik
Hafvet, som suckande slår mot din hembygds klippiga stränder!
Här är grönska och färger och lif. Otaliga holmar
Skjuta ur vågorna upp, och svajande vinka från alla
Lummiga trän, som bjuda den tröttade roddaren skugga.
Nalkas du udden, som nu tycks träffa det mötande landet,
Öppnas en vidare rymd af vatten, och trefliga byar
Skymta på stränderna fram, och kyrkan lyser i fjerran.

RUNEBERG: *Hanna*, iii. 9–16.

X.

Kom, Oihonna, mig följ i lifvet,
Jägarn älskar dig, rosiga sky!
Höga fjällarnes furste
Ber dig dela hans banors lust.

Såg du rymdernas glada syner
Högt från bergen i morgonens stund,
Såg du vaknade strålar
Dricka skälfvande dimmors dagg?

Mins du skogarnes ljud, då vinden
Rör med vingen de darrande löf,
Fogeln jublar, och rusig
Mellan hällarne bäcken flyr?

Eller vet du, hur hjertat klappar,
När vid hornens och hundarnes skall
Busken prasslar, och hjorten
Står för ögat med hejdadt språng?

Flicka, älskar du dunkla qvällen
Bleka stjernornas bäfvande ljus?
Kom, från toppen af Mallmor
Låt oss skåda, hur natten föds.

O, jag suttit på fjället ofta,
När i vester sin skimrande po
Solen slutit, och rodnan
Stilla vissnat på molnets hy.

Druckit svalkan af qvällens ande,
Skuggans vandring i dälderna sett,
Låtit tankarne irra
Kring den nattliga tystnans haf.

Skönt är lifvet på skyars höjdar,
Lätt man andas i doftande skog;
Blif min brud, och jag öppnar
För ditt hjerta en verld af fröjd.

RUNEBERG: *Kung Fjalar*, ii. 103–144.

V.—*TORPFLICKAN.*

Och solen sjönk och qvällen kom, den milda sommarqvällen,
Ett sken af mattad purpur göts kring bygderna och tjällen,
Från dagens mödor glad och trött en skara landtmän kom,
De fylt sitt värf, de vände nu till sina hyddor om.

De fylt sitt värf, de gjort sin skörd, en dyrbar skörd den gången,
En djerf, fiendtlig krigartrupp var nedgjord eller fången,
De dragit ut till kamp mot den vid morgonsolens sken,
När allt i seger ändadt var, då var det afton re'n.

Helt nära fältet, der den stått, den långa, heta striden,
Vid vägen låg ett litet torp, halft öde då för tiden,
På stugans låga trappa satt en flicka tyst och såg,
Hur skaran kom och drog förbi i fridsamt återtåg.

Hon såg som den, som söker, ser, hvem vet, på hvad hon tänkte?
På kinden brann en högre färg, än aftonrodnan skänkte,
Hon satt så stilla, men så varm, så spanande ändå,
Att, om hon lyssnat, som hon såg, hon hört sitt hjerta slå.

Men truppen gick sin bana fram, och flickan såg den tåga,
Till hvarje led, till hvarje man hon blickade en fråga,
En fråga, bäfvande och skygg, en fråga utan röst,
Mer tyst än sucken sjelf, som smög ur hennes fulla bröst.

När hela skaran gått förbi, de första som de sista,
Då svek den arma flickans lugn, då sågs dess styrka brista,
Hon grät ej högt, men pannan sjönk mot hennes öppna hand
Och stora tårar sköljde ljuft den friska kindens brand.

'Hvad är at gråta? Fatta mod, än står oss hoppet åter,
O dotter, hör din moders röst, en fåfäng tår du gråter;
Den, som ditt öga sökte nyss, och nu ej återfann,
Han lefver än, han tänkt på dig, och derför lefver han.

'Han tänkt på dig, han följt mitt råd att ej gå blindt mot faran,
Det var mitt tysta afskedsord, då hen drog hän med skaran.
Af tvång han följde truppan åt, hans håg var ej at slåss,
Jag vet, han ville icke dö från lifvets fröjd och oss.'

Och flickan såg med bäfven upp, ur sorgsna drömmer vacknad,
Det var som om en aning stört det stilla hjertats saknad,
Hon dröjde ej, hon såg en gång ditåt, der striden brann;
Och smög på väg och flydde tyst och skymdes och försvann.

En stund flöt bort, en stund ännu, det led mot natten redan,
I skyndsam molnet silfverhvitt, men skymning låg der nedan.
'Hon dröjer än; o dotter, kom, din oro fåfäng är,
I morgon, innan solen gryr, är re'n din brudgum här.'

Och dottern kom, med tysta fjät hon nalkades sin moder,
Det blida öget skymdes nu af inga tårefloder,
Men hennes hand, till helsning räckt, var kall som nattens vind,
Och hvitare än fästets sky var hennes svala kind.

'Red mig en graf, o moder kär, min lefnadsdag är liden;
Den man, som fick mitt hjertas tro, har flytt med skam ur striden;
Har tänkt på mig, har tänkt på sig, har följt ert varningsord
Och svikit sina bröders hopp och sina fäders jord.

'När skaran kom, och han ej kom, begrät jag nyss hans öde,
Jag trodde, att han låg som man på fältet bland de döde,
Jag sörjde, men min sorg var ljuf, det var ej bitter då,
Jag velat lefva tusen år, att honom sörja få.

'O moder, jag har sökt bland lik till sista skymt af dagen,
Men ingen af de slagna bar de kära anletsdragen,
Nu vill jag icke dväljas mer på denna svekets ö,
Han fans ej bland de döda der, och derför vill jag dö.'

RUNEBERG: *Fänrik Ståls Sägner.*

Z.

Men ved min Side strakte
En Yngling sig paa Bænken
I rolig Eftertænken
Og med et Drömmesmil,
Som dunkle Minder vakte
Om Kunstens Oldtidsstil.

Sandalen, som omgjorded
Hans Fod, var ziirlig knyttet,
En Arm hans Hoved stötted,
Den anden med sit Glas
Laa nögen henad Bordet,
Som stöbt af Phidias.

Og da jeg Öjet sænked,
Traf mig hiin Ynglings Blikke, —
Nei, Midnat ejer ikke
Saa stærkt et Stjernespil,
Mit Öje hang som lænket
Til denne muntre Ild!

BÖDTCHER: *Mödet med Bacchus.*

AA.

Han sænkede Pokalen,
Der kom en Ildcascade,
En Brusen, som i Blade,
Og saa en Duft af Viin,
Der fyldte Klippesalen
Med Roser og Jasmin.

Jeg drak, mens Öjet stirred
Bag Gnister og bag Dampe,—
Det var en magisk Lampe,
Et mystisk Perleslör,
Hvori jeg saae forvirret,
Men skjönnere end för.

Mig var det, som Colonner
Fra Gulvet steg med Bulder
Og skjöd en Marmorskulder
Ind under Kupplens Last,
Og Epheu bandt Festonner
Om Murens Alabast.

En sælsom Taage var der !
Med Eet de muntre Fade
Forsvandt fra deres Stade,
Og alvorsfuldt der laa
Syv gule Leoparder
Med Labben krydset, skraa.

BÖDTCHER : *Mödet med Bacchus.*

BB.

Wer leitet nû die lieben schar ?
Wer wîset diz gesinde ?
Ich wæne, ich sî wol vinde,
Diu die baniere füeren sol :
Ir meisterinne kan ez wol,
Diu von der Vogelweide.
Hei wie diu über heide
Mit hôher stimme schellet !
Waz wunders sî gestellet,
Wie spæhe s'organieret !
Wie si ir sanc wandelïeret !

Ich meine ab in dem dône
Dâ her von Zithêrône,
Dâ diu gotinne Minne
Gebiutet ûf und inne.
GOTTFRIED VON STRASSBURG: *Tristan*, 4794–4808.

CC.

Źahî wie'ch danne sunge von den vogellînen,
Von der heide und von den bluomen, als ich wîlent sanc!
Swelch schœne wîp mir danne gæbe ir habedanc,
Der lieze ich liljen unde rôsen ûz ir wängel schînen.
WALTHER VON DER VOGELWEIDE: *Ed. Bartsch.* cxlix. 4–7.

DD.

Der rîfe tet den kleinen vogelen wê,
Daz sie niht ensungen.
Nu hôrte ich s' aber wünneclîche als ê:
Nu ist diu heide entsprungen.
Dâ sach ich bluomen strîten wider den klê
Weder ir lenger wære.
Miner frouwen seite ich disiu mære.

Uns hat der winter kalt und ander nôt
Vel getân ze leide.
Ich wânde, daz ich iemer bluomen rôt
Sæhe an grüener heide.
Joch schâte ez guoten liuten, wære ich tôt,
Die nâch freuden rungen
Und je gerne tanzten unde sprungen.

Versûmde ich disen wünnichlîchen tac,
Sô wær' ich verwâzen
Und wære an freude ein angestlîcher slac:
Dennoch müese ich lâzen

Al mîne freude, der ich wîlent pflac.
Got gesegen' iuch alle:
Wünschet noch, daz mir ein heil gevalle.
WALTHER: *Ed. Bartsch.* lxxiii.

EE.

Got, dîne helfe uns sende!
Mit dîner zesewen hende
Bewar uns an dem ende,
Sô uns der geist verlât,
Vor helleheizen wallen,
Daz wir dar in iht vallen!
Ez ist wol kunt uns allen,
Wie jæmerlîche ez stât,
Daz hêre lant vil reine,
Gar helfelôs und eine.
Jerûsalêm, nû weine,
Wie din vergezzen ist!
WALTHER: *Ed. Bartsch.* lxxviii. 61–72.

FF.

Owê war sint verswunden alliu mîniu jar!
Ist mir mîn leben getroumet oder ist ez wâr?
Daz ich ie wânde daz iht wære, was daz iht?
Dar nâch hân ich geslâfen unde enweiz es niht.

Nû bin ich erwachet und ist mir unbekant
Daz mir hie vor was kündic als mîn ander hant.
Liut unde lant, dâ ich von kinde bin erzogen,
Die sint mir fremde worden, reht' als ez sî gelogen.

Mich grüezet maneger trâge, der mich bekande ê wol.
Diu werlt ist allenthalben ungenâden vol;
Als ich gedenke an manegen wünniclîchen tac,
Die sint mir enpfallen gar als in daz mer ein slac.

Owê wie jæmerlîche junge liut tuont!
Den unvil riuwecliche ir gemüete ê stuont,
Die kunnen nû wan sorgen: owê wie tuont sie sô?
Swar ich zer werlte kêre, dâ ist nieman frô.

Tanzen, lachen, singen zergât mit sorgen gar.
Nie kristenman gesach so jæmerlîche schar.
Nû merket, wie den frouwen ir gebénde stât;
Die stolzen ritter tragent dörperlîche wât.

. . . . . .

Dar zuo die vesten schilte und diu gewîhten swert!
Wolte got, wær' ich den sigenünfte wert!
Sô wolte ich nôtic man verdienen rîchen solt,
Jóch meine ich niht die huoben, noch der hêrren golt.

Ich wolte selbe krône êweclichen tragen;
Die möhte ein soldenære mit sîne sper bejagen.
Möht' ich die lieben reise gevaren über sê,
Sô wolte ich denne singen 'wol' und niemer mêre 'ouwê,'
Niemer mêre 'ouwê!'

WALTHER: *Ed. Bartsch.* clxxxviii.

GG.

Under der linden
An der heide,
Dâ unser zweier bette was,
Dâ muget ir vinden
Schône beide
Gebrochen bluomen unde gras.
Vor dem walde in einem tal,
Tandaradei!
Schône sane diu nahtegal.

Ich kam gegangen
Zuo der ouwe:

Dô was min friedel komen ê.
Dâ wart er enpfangen,
Hêre frouwe!
Daz ich bin sælic iemer mê.
Kuste er mich? wol tûsentstunt;
Tandaradei!
Sehet, wie rôt mir ist der munt.

Dô het er gemachet
Alsô rîche
Von bluomen eine bettestat;
Des wirt noch gelachet
Inneclîche,
Komt iemen an daz selbe pfat.
Bî den rôsen er wol mac
Tandaradei!
Merken wâ mir'z houbet lac.

Daz er bî mir læge,
Wesse ez jemen
(Nu enwelle got!) sô schamte ich mich.
Wes er mit mir pflæge,
Niemer niemen
Bevinde daz wan er und ich
Unde ein kleinez vogellîn:
Tandaradei!
Daz mac wol getriuwe sîn.

WALTHER: *Ed. Bartsch.* ix.

HH.

Hât der winter kurzen tac,
Sô hât er die langen naht,
Daz sich liep bî liebe mac
Wol erholn, daz ê dâ vaht.
Waz hân ich gesprochen? ôwê, jâ hæte ich baz geswigen.
Sol ich iemer sô geligen!

WALTHER: *Ed. Bartsch.* lviii. 13–18.

II.

Got hâte ir wengel hôhen flîz :
Er streich sô tiure varwe dar,
Sô reine rôt, sô reine wîz,
Hie rœseloht, dort liljenvar.
Ob ich'z vor sünden tar gesagen,
Sô sæhe ich s'iemer gerner an
Dan himel oder himelwagen.
Ôwê waz lobe ich tumber man ?
Mach' ich mir sie ze hêr
Vil lihte wirt mîns mundes lop mîns herzen sêr.

WALTHER : *Ed. Bartsch.* xvii. 21–30.

JJ.

Frô Sælde teilet umbe mich
Und kêret mir den rucke zuo.
Da enkan si niht erbarmen sich :
I'n weiz waz ich dar umbe tuo.
Si stêt ungerne gegen mir :
Louf' ich hin umbe, ich bin doch iemer hinder ir,
Si' n ruochet mich niht ane sehen,
Ich wolte, daz ir ougen an ir nacke stüenden—so müeste ez âne ir danc geschehen.

WALTHER : *Ed. Bartsch.* xxix.

KK.

Von der Elbe unz an den Rîn
Und her wider unz an der Unger lant
Mugen wol die besten sîn,
Die ich in der werlte hân erkant.

Kan ich rehte schouwen
Guot gelâz und lîp,
Sam mir got, sô swüere ich wol daz hie diu wîp
Bezzer sint dann' ander frouwen.

WALTHER: *Ed. Bartsch.* xxxix. 25–32.

LL.

Dô den sumer komen was,
Und die bluomen durch daz gras
Wünneclîche ensprungen,
Aldâ die vogele sungen,
Dar kom ich gegangen
An einen anger langen;
Dâ ein lûter brunne entspranc;
Vor dem walde was sîn ganc,
Dâ diu nahtegale sanc.

WALTHER: *Ed. Bartsch.* iv. 1–9.

MM.

Had hy Holland dan gedragen
Onder't hart,
Tot sijn af-geleefde dagen
Met veel smart,
Om't meyneedigh swaert te laven
Met sijn bloet
En te mesten kray en raven
Op sijn goet?

VONDEL: *Genze-Vesper.*

NN.

Een Vrouw die niet als singht en tuyt,
Die garen danst, en die de Luyt
Schier nimmer uyt haer handen leydt,
Fy, fy, dat is lichtveerdigheydt.

Maer is het niet een hemel schier,
Te sien hoe dat een geestigh dier,
Met sangh of spel haer man verquickt,
Als't noodigh huyswerck is beschickt?

Misbruyck verkeert het soetste soet
In walchelijck en bitter roet,
Ja heylsaem nutte medicijn,
T'ontijdt gebruyckt, keert in fenijn.

Dan die sijn oogh op't eeuwigh slaet,
De tijdelijcke fraeyheydt laet:
De met al't wereltsche gespoock
Verdwijnen sal als windt en roock.

ANNA ROEMERS: *Zinne-Poppen*, 1669.

OO.

Somtijds kiest gij't zeskant huisken
Voor uw afgescheiden kluisken;
En zijt, in dees eenzaamheên,
Nimmer min dan dus alleen.
In dit kluisken werd geboren
(t'Was zoo van uw lot beschoren)
's Grooten Hendriks groote faam,
En de grootheid van zijn naam
Kwam uit deze kleenheid rennen,
Vlug geworden door uw pennen.

VONDEL: *Nog een Brief aan den Drost van Muiden*, 29–38.

PP.

PHYLLIS KLACHTE.

Mijn schaepjes, die uw honger bluste
Met weeldrig thijm, boet nu uw luste
Met rooseblaedtjes van mijn krans,

Die al haer geur ten offer brachten,
Mijn breyn, dat hart en ziel verkrachte,
Wanneer ick uytstack aen den dans.

't Is beter, dat de bloempjes voeden
Mijn lamm'ren, die ick stervend hoedde,
Als dat ze, van haer eer berooft
Door suchten, die mijn leven quellen
En heete traentjes trouw versellen,
Ontschuldigh dorren op mijn hooft.

Erkauwse menighmael met smaeckjens,
Onnoosel vee; maer als uw kaeckjens
Vermoeyt zijn, ende slaep u groet,
Peinst dan eens om mijn doode leven,
Wat oorsaeck dat mijn sinnen dreven
Tot schennis van mijn roosen-hoet.

Ghy waert er by, toen my Philander
Zijn trouw toe swoer, die nu een ander
Met geyle tochten besich houdt;
Ghy waert er by, toen my zijn eden
In't huwlijk met hem deden treden,
Dat in den Hemel was gebouwt.

Doch'k wensch geen straf, maer bid voor sonde;
'k Eysch balsem voor een' vuyle wonde,
'k Eysch balsem die den Hemel voed.
Maer is uw wil tot straf genegen,
Soo straf't bedroch, en wel ter degen,
Met wroegingh van zijn snood gemoet.

Dan sal gewis mijn leet hem deeren,
Mijn liefde tot zijn liefde keeren,
Zijn liefde wederom tot mijn;
Als ghy ons dan hebt t' saem gebonden,
Nooyt is er trouwer paer gevonden,
Dan Phyllis en Philander zijn.

TESSELSCHADE · *Het Amsterdamsch Minnebeeckje.*

QQ.

WILDE ZANGSTER.

Prijst vry den Nachtegael,
Als hy u meenigmael
Verlust en schatert uyt,
Een zingend vedertje en een gewieckt geluyt.

Wiens quinckelere soet,
De oore luystren doet,
Gauw, nae het tiereliertje
Der vlugge luchtigheyd van't oolijk vrolijk diertje.

Wiens tijlpend schril geluyt
Gelijck een orgel fluyt,
Veel losse toontjes speelt,
En met een tong alleen, als duyzent tongen queelt.

Zijn hoogh' en laege zwier
Met lieffelijk getier
Van't helle schelle zoetje
Vermeestert al't gesang van't zingend springend goetje.

Een diertje wiens gelaet
In zeldzaemheyd bestaet,
Om dat het niet en heeft
Als zangh die maer een maent in't gansche jaer en leeft.

Maer't meeste wonder dat
Zijn roem ooit heeft gehadt,
Is dat zoo kleine leden
Herbergen zulk een kracht van die luydruchtigheden.

TAMME ZANGSTER.

Maer wilde Zangster zwijg,
En nae uw adem lijgh!
Uw tjukken heeft geen klem,
Noch komt niet by den aerdt van Rosemondtjes stem.

Die na een liever trant
Doet luystren het verstandt,
Met wisse maet en snikjes,
Die vriendlijkheytjes sluyt in vaster toonestrikjes.

Wiens rede stem vertaelt
En waerdiger onthaelt
De geestjes van 't gehoor,
En hupplen doet de ziel van 't hartje tot aen 't oor.

Als zy met grof gedreun,
En dan met teer gekreun
Van minnelijke treeken
Doet onderscheidelijk verscheyde tongen spreeken.

Geen veelheyt ons verveelt,
Hoe veel haer keeltje kweelt,
Maer eenen verschen lust
Bekoort het graege oor als 't maer een snikje rust.

'T is zeldzamer geneught,
Die staegh op nieuw verheught,
Geen stemmigheyt zoo lustigh,
Als deez' die zomers is en 's winters even rustigh.

TESSELSCHADE: *Verscheidene Gedichten*, 1653.

RR.

Mingod, streng van heerschappy,
Ziet ghy wel die Maeght aen't Y
Op het eêlste van haer daegen,
Die uw' moeder heeft ontdraegen
Blos van kaeken, en den slagh
Van die lieffelijke lach! * * *

Wat, zich, trekt zy zorgen aen?
Zinnen werken, handen gaen,

Doonde zijn haer oogen zedigh,
Keel en lippen zijn onleedigh;
Magh een jeughdt zoo groen en friś
Tegen zoo veel moeyenis?

Vat zy diamant; een kras
Spreeken doet het stomme glas;
Ziet dien duim, met gouden draeden,
Maelen kostele gewaeden;
Vingers voeren pen, penseel,
Knockels kittelen de veel.

Ziet dan gaet dat mondjen weêr,
Met de nooten, op en neêr;
't Oogh zich aen de letters lijmen,
De gedachten aen het rijmen;
Tong zich krommen in de klank
Van den Roomer en den Frank.

HOOFT: *Bruyloftzang.*

SS.

Onttooyt of tooyt ghy u, Maria Magdalene,
Als ghy uw hayr ontvlecht, verwerpt de luystersteenen,
Verbreeckt het perlensnoer, versmaedt het scheinbaer goed,
En keurt voor vuyl en vals, al wat dat voordeel doet.
Om dees uw malsche jeucht het eeuwigh te beletten,
En op een stronckelsteen uw toeverlaet te setten?
Godvruchte vrouw! Ghy haeckt vast nae een stalen muur,
Die niet beswijcken kan door tijt oft droevig uur.

TESSELSCHADE: *Maria Magdalena.*

JT.

Als van twee ghepaerde schelpen
De eene breeckt, of wel verliest;
Niemant zal u konnen helpen,
Hoe men soeckt, hoe nau men kiest,

Aen een, die met effen randen
Juyst op d'ander passen sou ;
D'outste sijn de beste panden
Niets en gaet voor d'eerste trouw.

CATS.

UU.

Dit is Tesselschades Graf.
Liet niemand zich vermeeten
Haer onwaerdeerlijkheid in woorden uit te meeten :
Al wat men van de Zon kan zeggen gaet haer af.

Hoe dat ze om't leven kwam
Verhael ik even noode.
Wat dunkt u, Moeders! 't was haer Dochter die haer doodde,
En die zy't leven gaf, was die haer't leven nam.

Maer't kind had weinig schuld ;
De Moeder zag het sterven,
En stierf om dat zy't haer geliet te kunnen derven.
Zoo sneefde Tesselschâe door al te veel geduld.

HUYGHENS : *Korenbloemen.*

VV.

Bejegent Engelen, hoe schoonze uw oogh behaeghden,
Het zijn wanschapenheên by 't morgenlicht der maeghden.

BEELSEBUB.

Het schijnt, ghy blaeckt van minne om 't vrouwelijcke dier.

APOLLION.

Ick heb mijn slaghveêr in dat aengename vier
Gezengt. Het vielme zwaer van onder op te stijgen,
Te roeien, om den top van Engleburgh te krijgen.

Ick scheide, doch met pijn, en zag wel driewerf om.
Nu blinckt geen Serafijn, in 't hemelsch heilighdom,
Als deze, in 't hangend hair, een goude nis van stralen,
Die schoon gewatert van den hoofde nederdalen,
En vloeien om den rugh. Zoo komtze, als uit een licht,
Te voorschijn, en verheught den dagh met haer gezicht.
Laet perle en perlemoer u zuiverheit beloven;
Haer blanckheit gaet de perle en perlemoer te boven.

BEELSEBUB.

Wat baet al 's menschen roem, indiën zijn schoonheit smelt,
En eindelyck verwelckt, gelijck een bloem op 't velt?

VONDEL: *Lucifer*, i. 162–177.

WW.

LUCIFER.

Ghy snelle Geesten, houdt nu stant met onzen wagen:
Al hoogh genoegh in top Godts Morgenstar gedragen;
Al hoogh genoegh gevoert: 't is tijdt, dat Lucifer
Nu duicke voor de komst van deze dubble star,
Die van beneden rijst, en zoekt den wegh naer boven,
Om met een aertschen glans den Hemel te verdooven.
Borduurt geen kroonen meer in Lucifers gewaet;
Vergult zijn voorhooft niet met eenen dageraet
Van morgenstarre en strael, waer voor d'Aertsenglen nijgen!
Een andre klaerheit komt in 't licht der Godtheit stijgen,
En schijnt ons glansen doot; gelijck de zon by daegh
De starren dooft, voor 't oogh der schepselen, om laegh.
't Is nacht met Engelen, en alle Hemelzonnen.

VONDEL: *Lucifer*, ii. 1–13.

XX.

REY VAN ENGELEN.

Hoe zien de hoffelijcke gevels
  Zoo root? hoe straelt het heiligh licht
  Zoo root op ons gezicht,
Door wolcken en bedroefde nevels?
  Wat damp, wat mist betreckt
  Dat zuiver, noit bevleckt,
  En loutere saffier?
  Die vlam, dien glans, dat vier
Van 't heldere Alvermogen?
  Hoe schijnt ons nu de diepe gloet
  Der Godtheit toe, zoo zwart als bloet,
Die flus zoo klaer alle oogen
  Verheughde?

VONDEL: *Lucifer*, ii. 385–397.

YY.

TEGENZANG.

Toen wy, op Gabriëls bazuinen,
  Ontvonckten, en een nieuwe wijs
  Aenhieven, Godt ten prijs;
De rozegaerden, en de tuinen
  Van 't hemelsch paradijs,
  Door zulck een dau en spijs
Van lof en zang verblijt,
  Ontloken; scheen de Nijt
Van onder in te sluipen.
  Een groot getal der Geesten, stom
  En bleeck en dootsch, ging, drom by drom,
Misnoegend henedruipen:
  De winckbraeu hing verslenst op 't oogh,
Het gladde voorhooft zette een rimpel;
  De Hemelduiven, hier om hoogh,

Onnozel eerst, oprecht, en simpel,
Aen 't zuchten sloegen, zoo het scheen;
Als of de Hemel viel te kleen
Voor haer, toen Adam wert verkoren,
En zulck een kroon den mensch beschoren.
Dees smet ontstelt het oogh van 't Licht.
Z' ontsteeckt die vlam in Godts gezicht.

VONDEL: *Lucifer*, ii. 407–428.

ZZ.

Houdt op van kermen: scheurt veltteeckens en gewaden
Niet langer zonder reên, maer heldert uw gezicht
En voorhooft met een strael, o kinders van het licht!
De schelle keelen, die met zang de Godtheit dancken,
Zien om, en belgen 't zich, om dat ghy valsche klancken
En basterttoonen mengt in 't goddelijck muzijck.

VONDEL: *Lucifer*, iii. 222–227.

AAA.

Ontferm u, Lucifer! Gedoog niet, dat onze Orden
Zoo laegh vernedert worde, en zonder schult verzink',
De mensch, gelijck een hooft der Englen, strale, en blinck',
In 't ongenaeckbre licht, waer voor de Serafijnen,
Al bevende van angst, als schaduwen verdwijnen.

. . . . . .

Wy zweeren u met kracht, in volle majesteit,
Te zetten op den troon, aen Adam toegeleît.
Wy zweeren uwen arm eendraghtigh t' onderstutten,
Aenvaert dees heirbijl: help, och help ons Recht beschutten!

VONDEL: *Lucifer*, iii. 422–434.

BBB.

Volght dezen Helt, op zijn bazuin en trom,
Beschut de kroon van 't Engelsdom !
Ziet, ay ziet nu de Morgenstar blincken !

VONDEL : *Lucifer*, iii. 507–509.

CCC.

Ick zagh Godts blyschap zelf zich met een wolck van rou
Beschaduwen, in 't endt de wraeck een vlam ontsteecken
In d' oogen van het licht, eer, om dien slagh te breecken,
Het last gaf tot den toght. Ick hoorde een wijl het pleit,
Hoe d' opperste Genade, en Godts gerechtigheit
Elckandre in wederwight, met pit van reden, hielen.
Ick zagh de Cherubijns, hoeze op hun aenzicht vielen,
En riepen vast : Genâ, genâ, o Heer ! geen Recht.
Men had dit zwaer geschil gezoent, en schier geslecht,
Zoo scheen de Godtheit tot genade en zoen genegen ;
Maer als de wyroockstanck in top komt opgesteegen,
De smoock, die Lucifer om laegh wort toegezwaeit,
Met wyroockvat, bazuin, en lofgezangen, draeit
De Hemel zijn gezicht van zulcke afgoderyen,
Gevloeckt van Godt, en Geest, en alle Hierarchyen.

VONDEL : *Lucifer*, iv. 34–48.

DDD.

Het groeide snel, en wies, gelijck een halve maen.
Het wet zijn punten, zet twee horens op ons aen ;
Gelijck 't gestarrent van den Stier de Hemeldieren
En andre monsters, die rondom hem henezwieren,
Met goude hoornen dreight.

VONDEL : *Lucifer*, v. 53–57.

EEE.

Gelijck een binnenzee, of noortsche waterval,
Die van de rotsen bruischt, en ruischt, met een geschal,
Dat dier en ondier schrickt, in diepgezoncke dalen,
Daer steenen, van de steilte, en dicke waterstralen.

VONDEL: *Lucifer*, v. 161–164.

FFF.

REY.

Gezegent zij de Helt,
Die 't goddeloos gewelt,
En zijn maght, en zijn krachт, en zijn standert
Ter neder heeft gevelt.
Die Godt stack naer Zijn kroon,
Is, uit den hoogen troon,
Met zijn maght in den nacht neêrgezoncken.
Hoe blinckt Godts naem zoo schoon!
Al brant het oproer fel,
De dappre Michaël
Weet den brant met zijn hant uit te blusschen,
Te straffen dien rebel.
Hy hanthaeft Godts banier,
Bekranst hem met laurier.
Dit palais groeit in pais, en in vrede;
Geen tweedraght hoort men hier.
Nu zingt de Godtheit lof,
In 't onverwinbaer hof.
Prijs en eer zij den Heer aller Heeren!
Hy geeft ons zingens stof.

VONDEL: *Lucifer*, v. 275–294.

GGG.

GABRIEL.

Helaes, helaes, helaes, hoe is de kans gekeert!
Wat viert men hier? 't is nu vergeefs getriomfeert:
Vergeefs met wapenroof en standerden te brall—

MICHAEL.

Wat hoor ick, Gabriël?

GABRIEL.

Och, Adam is gevallen;
De vader en de stam van 't menschelijck geslacht
Te jammerlijck, te droef alreê ten val gebracht.

VONDEL: *Lucifer*, v. 313–318.

HHH.

Ozias, aen wiens vuist de Godtheit zelf vereerde
Den zwaren hamer van geklooncken diamant,
En ketens van robijn, en krammen, spits van tant,
Ga hene, vang en span het heir der helsche dieren,
Den Leeu, en fellen Draeck, die tegens ons banieren
Dus woeden: vaegh de lucht van dees vervloeckte jaght,
En boeize aen neck en klaeu, en ketenze met kracht.
Dees sleutel van den put des afgronts en zijn holen
Wort, Azarias, u en uwe zorg bevolen.
Ga hene, sluit in 't hol al wat ons maght bestrijt.
Maceda, neem dees torts, die vlam is u gewijt:
Ontsteeckt den zwavelpoel in 't middelpunt der aerde,
En pijnigh Lucifer, die zoo veel gruwlen baerde,

In 't eeuwighbrandend vier, gemengt met killen vorst;
Daer Droefheit, Gruwzaemheit, Versteentheit, Honger, Dorst,
De Wanhoop, zonder troost, de prickel van 't Geweten,
En Onverzoenbaerheit, een straf van 't boos vermeten.

VONDEL: *Lucifer*, v. 448–463.

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